

H B

761

3-17-82

Introduced: 2/12/82
Referred: Health, Education &
Social Services and Finance

1 IN THE HOUSE

BY ADAMS

2 HOUSE BILL NO. 761

3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4 TWELFTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

5 A BILL

6 For an Act entitled: "An Act relating to teachers' retirement; and providing
7 for an effective date."

8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

9 *Section 1. AS 14.25.110(a) is amended to read:

10 (5) has at least 20 years of membership service; [or]

11 (6) has at least 20 years of combined membership service and

12 Alaska BIA service, the last five of which have been membership service

13 [.] ; OR

14 * Sec. 2. AS 14.25.110(a) is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

15 (7) has at least (15 years) of membership service in a community
16 with a population of less than 4,000.

17 * Sec. 3. This Act takes effect immediately in accordance with AS 01.10.-

18 070.

19 *Why different from anyone else?*

20 - *Bake's outcry - NEA: yes No policy decision made!*
21 *But yes - yes.*

22 *20 yrs = Benefits (no) + about 12g.*

23 *J. B. Greene -*

FISCAL NOTE

I. REQUEST

Bill/Resolution No. HB 761
 Title An Act Relating to TRS; and Providing for an Effective Date
 Requested by _____ Date _____

II. FISCAL DETAIL

Agency Affected Administration - Division of Retirement & Benefits
 Program Category Affected Centralized Administration Services & Secondary Education
 BRU, Program, or Subprogram(s) Affected Retirement & Benefits
 (Note: If more than one budget component is affected, separate line-item amounts and funding for each component in the analysis section.)
EXPENDITURES (Thousands of Dollars)

	FY 82	FY 83	FY 84	FY 85	FY 86	FY 87
700 PERSONAL SERVICES						
100 RETIREMENT BENEFITS		228.2	282.2	221.8	288.1	329.0
200 TRAVEL						
300 CONTRACTUAL						
400 COMMODITIES						
500 EQUIPMENT						
600 LAND & STRUCTURES						
700 GRANTS, CENTS, ETC.						
700 STATE TRS MATCHING		1,212.5	1,338.2	1,873.1	1,670.8	1,782.4
TOTAL		1,440.7	1,586.4	1,745.0	1,919.5	2,111.4

FUNDING (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND		1,440.7	1,586.4	1,745.0	1,919.5	2,111.4
FEDERAL FUNDS						
VETERAN'S FUND						
FISH & GAME FUND						
WILDLIFE FUND						
AIRPORT FUND						
CAPITAL FUND						
FELS						
TRF						

POSITIONS NONE

FULL TIME						
PART TIME						
TEMPORARY						

III. ANALYSIS (See Fiscal Note Preparation Instructions, Section III)

- To fund this bill the TRS contribution rate must be increased by .82% of covered payroll (the TRS contribution rate is split 50/50 between the State and employers in the system).
- Estimate FY83 TRS covered payroll at \$796,967,000, and increasing 10% annually.
- The cost to school districts is estimated to be \$987,007 in '83

DATE March 15, 1982 PREPARED BY Paul B. Arnold, Director
 Original: Legislative Finance Division of Retirement & Benefits
 cc: Support and Management HR-1100

ASSUMPTIONS:

1. Estimated FY83 Payroll (Total System)	=	\$296,962,000
2. State Contribution Rate to Fund Bill	=	.41%
3. State TRS Matching rate to Fund Bill	=	.41%
4. School District Rate to Fund Bill	=	.41%

COST ANALYSIS:

<u>Employer</u>	<u>Payroll</u>		<u>Rate</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Appropriation</u>
1. Department of Education:	\$ 5,133,000	X	.41%	\$ 21.0	To DOE Budget
2. University of Alaska:	\$ 49,691,000	X	.41%	\$ 203.7	To U of A Budget
				<u>\$ 224.7</u>	
3. State TRS Matching:	\$296,962,000	X	.41%	\$1,217.5	To TRS Match
4. Division of Retirement & Benefits Operating Budget:					
Personal Services				\$ -0-	To R&B Personal
Travel				\$ -0-	To R&B Travel
Contractual				\$ -0-	To R&B Contractual
Commodities				\$ -0-	To R&B Commodities
Equipment				\$ -0-	To R&B Equipment
				<u>\$ -0-</u>	
				<u>\$1,442.2</u>	
5. All School Districts:	\$242,143,000	X	.41%	\$ 992.8	
				<u>\$2,435.0</u>	

REMARKS:

S U P P L E M E N T A L
R E P O R T T O T H E L E G I S L A T U R E

O N R E A A S C H O O L D I S T R I C T S

B Y

T H E R E A A B U D G E T O V E R S I G H T C O M M I T T E E

M a r c h 1 5 , 1 9 8 2

C o m m i t t e e M e m b e r s

S e n a t o r F r a n k R. F e r g u s o n
C h a i r m a n

R e p r e s e n t a t i v e J o e D. M o n t g o m e r y
V i c e - C h a i r m a n

R e p r e s e n t a t i v e J o h n G. F u l l e r

R e p r e s e n t a t i v e H. P a p p y M o s s

S e n a t o r B o b M u l c a h y

S e n a t o r T e r r y S t i m s o n

IV. RESOLUTION (3)

Resolution (3) of the Legislative Resolve mandates the following to the Committee:

(3) evaluate the effect on high teacher turnover on regional educational attendance area programs; and

To meet this mandate a questionnaire was mailed to all 21 REAAs to evaluate the effect of teacher turnover on the REAA educational programs (Appendix E). At the suggestion of the National Education Association (NEA) two additional questions on teacher recruiting were teletyped to all REAA school districts (Appendix F).

The questionnaire was returned by 13 REAAs (Railbelt, Pribilofs, Yukon Flats, Yukon-Koyukuk, Northwest Arctic, Bering Straits, Lower Yukon, Alaska Gateway, Southeast Island, Iditarod, Annette Island, Southwest, and Delta Greely); and 7 REAAs (Southeast Island, Northwest Arctic, Lower Yukon, Southwest, Railbelt, Aleutian, and Chatham), as well as, the North Slope Borough School District, the Matanuska-Susitna (Mat-Su) School District, the Sand Point School District, the Yakutat City School District, St. Mary's School District, Haines Borough School District, Ketchikan Borough School District, and Cordova Public Schools responded to the teletyped questions.

It was attempted to discover the extent of teacher turnover in the REAAs, as well as the effect, causes, and cures for high turnover. The pivotal factor in all of these appears to be the cultural differences between urban (predominantly white teachers) and rural (predominantly Native students, communities and lifestyles). Impact of the Alaskan rural lifestyle on urban teachers, as well as expectations on the part of both newly arrived teachers and local residents can have a significant impact on a teacher's acceptance by a community and on a teacher's adjustment to village life.

Most districts responding to the teletyped questions on teacher recruiting indicated they recruited as much as possible within the State. "The standard procedure is not to go toddling all over the country in search of teachers." (Walter Brown, Superintendent of the Lower Yukon School District). In addition, most districts indicated that they informed prospective teachers as much as possible of local conditions before they accepted teaching positions. However, information attempts do not always have ideal results. Don Renfroe, Superintendent of the North Slope Borough School District stated that:

We spend a great deal of time in trying to inform all new hires about their jobs, their working conditions, their living conditions, and background of the local people - their language, culture and history . . . However, I believe it would be impossible to apprise them of all the

conditions in which they would be teaching. Until they have actually experienced rural Alaska, they do not have the background to understand what they have heard. (Emphasis added.)

The teacher turnover questionnaire was kept simple to be less burdensome to the REAAs as well as to allow the districts latitude in responding. In the attempt to gather information on degree of teacher turnover in the REAAs, the questionnaire asked for numbers of new and returning teachers in 1978, 1979, and 1980. These numbers are reproduced in the following pages. It should be noted that the numbers are probably slightly skewed because of the new rural secondary programs demanding additional teachers, which were started in those years.

The most obvious trend in degree of turnover lay in the location of the district. Teacher turnover appears to be significantly lower in those districts along the highway system, as well as, in districts such as Southeast Island which enjoys a mild climate. Turnover of teaching staff in more remote districts seems to be closely tied to the rigors of the rural lifestyle, and to the motivation of teachers in choosing teaching sites.

Teacher housing was a sore point which cropped up in many responses. Bering Straits REAA cited teacher housing as causing teacher turnover in 40% of the cases. Most of the remote REAAs listed district involvement in teacher

housing as a positive aspect in encouraging teachers to remain in the district.

Many district responses mentioned career plans of teachers as a reason for turnover. One superintendent stated this most bluntly:

Most teachers in rural Alaska have never experienced rural life. They are used to swimming pools, racketball courts, nice restaurants, current movies, etc. The adjustments are hard. All too often the motivation to stay in the 'bush' is centered around money. Rural teachers are able to save money faster than city and borough teachers because they don't have a whole lot of things to spend money on. Many rural teachers stay there because they can't get jobs in the cities or in school districts along a highway. If you could find out where 'bush' teachers apply you would find, by far, the greatest majority trying to get into 'civilized' areas.

Most REAA school districts appear to be addressing the issue of teacher turnover within their local and regional constraints. Many districts seem to be placing growing reliance on the University of Alaska's Placement Office for teacher recruiting. It is evident that this is a time of transition, particularly for the remote REAAs. Retaining quality teaching personnel is important, both as a short-term and long-term goal. Perhaps this is only really achievable when more local residents and resident Alaskans return to their communities as teachers familiar with the local life.

However, a much more important long-range goal appears to be a solid academic curriculum, which while sensitive to the needs of local culture and conditions, supplies an education on par with that supplied to urban students. Dr. Stanley Bippus, Superintendent of the Pribilof Islands School District stated:

I am pleased to see the effects of high teacher turnover on education programs being studied. I hope when the evaluation is being done you will look at the quality of the curriculum in place with each school district. The effects of turnover are often determined by the management system a school district has in operation to monitor and evaluate student progress. If a detailed curriculum does not exist in the form of specific outcomes, teacher turnover will have a tremendous impact. Be sure the problem is turnover and not poor organization . . . I have hired two people this year for a one year tour of duty. I would rather have a high turnover with top people working here than stability with mediocre teachers staying on. The Pribilof Islands have enjoyed a relatively low turnover in the past but our student achievement is terrible. Stability does not mean quality. (Emphasis added.)

TEACHER TURNOVER QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

Alaska Gateway REAA. The district stated they are not experiencing a high teacher turnover.

	<u>New Teachers</u>	<u>Returning Teachers</u>
1978	18	22
1979	12	30
1980	10	32

Bering Straits REAA. The district placed an emphasis on teacher housing as causing teacher turnover in 40% of the cases.

	<u>New Teachers</u>	<u>Returning Teachers</u>
1978	19	25
1979	22	22
1980	18	43

The district listed the following positive aspects of the district in encouraging teachers to remain:

1. negotiated agreements/salary schedule/benefits;
2. housing improvements and subsidy;
3. administrative concern for staff;
4. activities program; and

5. budget support for programs; progressive leadership.

Iditarod REAA. The district placed an emphasis on the possibility of violent accident and homicide rate causing teacher turnover.

	<u>New Teachers</u>	<u>Returning Teachers</u>
1978	14	21
1979	9	28
1980	15	24
1981	12	31

The district listed the following positive aspects of the district in encouraging teachers to remain:

1. supportive, informed stable school board (one new member in six years);
2. successfully worked to have two State Troopers based in the area who cooperate with local alcohol and drug abuse treatment and prevention programs; and
3. requires local interviews of all teacher candidates (at their expense) before hiring decisions are made. Both the local communities and prospective teachers can "size up" each other and see first hand what housing conditions are;

4. the district does not recruit outside Alaska; and
5. strong community school committees.

Southeast Island REAA. The district listed interpersonal relations and emotional and physical well-being as reasons for not returning. In addition, they mentioned that in 1978 and 1979, many older teachers who had been in state-operated schools retired.

	<u>New Teachers</u>	<u>Returning Teachers</u>
1978	2	30
1979	12*	26
1980	6*	31

*.4 new positions

Southeast Island REAA listed the following positive aspects of the school district in encouraging teachers to remain:

1. good salary and benefits;
2. good housing;
3. warm climate; and
4. good working conditions.

Yukon Flats School District

	<u>New Teachers</u>	<u>Returning Teachers</u>
1978	4	23
1979	7	34
1980	2	28

The district's educational program has been influx for the past year, which may result in high teacher turnover.

Southwest Region District. This district does not interview teachers out of state. Southwest Region feels that teacher turnover occurs because teachers planned a 2-3 year stay in Alaska. An additional factor is the inability of an outsider to buy land.

	<u>New Teachers</u>	<u>Returning Teacher</u>
1978	25	22
1979	14	31
1980	19	29

Positive aspects of Southwest Region 'n encouraging teachers to remain include:

1. extensive involvement in teacher housing (including (district), leased and maintained local housing;

2. competitive salary schedule;
3. staff involvement in curriculum development;
4. pre-employment information and two-day orientation for new teachers before school starts; and
5. site visitation for key employees prior to employment.

Yukon/Koyukuk School District. The district mentioned cross-cultural relations, interpersonal relations, and emotional and physical well-being as reasons for teacher turnover.

	<u>New Teachers</u>	<u>Returning Teachers</u>
1978	15	46.5
1979	16	47
1980	10	60

Yukon/Koyukuk' listed the following positive aspects in encouraging teachers to remain:

1. adequate, low cost housing;
2. teaching materials and supplies available;

3. teacher in-service and training; and
4. opportunities for transfer and advancement.

Railbelt REAA. The Railbelt School District did not interview teachers out of state. The district has a very low turnover - generally less than 10%, usually caused by natural attrition.

	<u>New Teachers</u>	<u>Returning Teachers</u>
1978	9	26
1979	4	27
1980	10*	25

* Includes five newly funded positions.

Railbelt feels that the positive aspects of the school district in encouraging teacher retention include:

1. strong administration, board and community support;
2. good school system;
3. good geographic location on the highway between Anchorage and Fairbanks near the Denali National Park.

Pribilofs REAA. The district feels the major reason for teacher turnover is teacher's obtaining jobs in city districts. Other reasons cited included school district decision and interpersonal relations.

	<u>New Teachers</u>	<u>Returning Teachers</u>
1978	5	8
1979	3	12
1980	4	10

Positive aspects in encouraging teachers to remain which were cited by the Pribilofs included:

1. fair treatment;
2. administrative support;
3. freedom of methodology;
4. good wages and fringe benefits; and
5. good housing.

Northwest Arctic REAA. The district rated reasons for teacher turnover as follows:

35% Various reasons including spouse not successful in job; spouse not liking community; returning to schools

22% Interpersonal relations

19% School district decision

14% Emotional and physical well-being

6% Cross cultural relations

4% Housing

	<u>New Teachers</u>	<u>Returning Teachers</u>
1978	56	71
1979	42	90
1980	48	94

Positive aspects in encouraging teachers to remain which were listed by the district included:

1. salaries and benefits;
2. working conditions;
3. students;

4. community.

Lower Yukon REAA. The district listed need of change, family and professional goals as reasons for teacher turnover.

	<u>New Teachers</u>	<u>Returning Teachers</u>
1978	16	49
1979*	42	60
1980	20	85

* 7 new high school programs.

Positive aspects listed by Lower Yukon in encouraging teachers to remain included:

1. housing;
2. curriculum direction;
3. unity of purpose;
4. leadership.

Delta Greely REAA. The district listed spouse's job or employment; continuing education; and health problems in the family as reasons for teacher turnover.

	<u>New Teachers</u>	<u>Returning Teachers</u>
1978	10	48
1979	17	45
1980	9	54

Delta Greely listed the fact that the district is on a highway system, has a close proximity to Fairbanks, and has a stable population as positive aspects in encouraging teacher retention.

TEACHER RECRUITMENT (con't.)

	<u>Alaska Hire</u>	<u>Interview Outside State</u>	<u>Informati Provide</u>
Northwest Arctic		13% hired teachers inter- viewed outside state	yes
Railbelt	All teachers interviewed in Alaska	no	extensiv
St. Mary's		no	
Haines Borough	100%		
Ketchikan Borough	Local residents and through the Alaska Placement Office in Fairbanks	no	
Cordova School	All teachers inter- viewed in Alaska, mostly Anchorage	no	
Sand Point City	If possible	no	All teach hired with interview Sand Point
Yakutat City	Through Alaska Placement Office in Fairbanks	no	
North Slope Borough	10 out of 30 new hires from Alaska		extensiv
Lower Yukon	All teachers inter- viewed within Alaska	no	

TEACHER RECRUITMENT (con't.)

	<u>Alaska Hire</u>	<u>Interview Outside State</u>	<u>Information Provided</u>
Aleutian	Through Alaska Placement Office in Fairbanks	no	extensive
Southeast Island	Teachers inter- viewed in Ketchikan	no	extensive visit to community
Mat-Su Borough	Teachers inter- viewed in-state	no	

QUESTIONNAIRE

Teacher Turnover

1. How many teachers were employed by your school district at the beginning of the school years:

	<u>New Teachers</u>	<u>Returning Teachers</u>
1978	_____	_____
1979	_____	_____
1980	_____	_____

2. If you are experiencing a teacher turnover, what do you believe causes teachers to decide not to return to your district.

- a. Cross-cultural relations _____
- b. Interpersonal Relations _____
- c. Emotional and physical well-being _____
- d. Housing _____
- e. School district decision _____
- f. Other _____

3. What positive aspects of the school district encourages teachers to remain in your district.

Teacher Recruiting Questions

LR #41

Questions telexed out to all school districts by Steve Hole 3/2/82:

What percentage of your new certificated hires did you personally interview at sites outside of Alaska?

If you hired them, do you feel they understood all of the circumstances and conditions in which they would be teaching?



Official Business

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House of Representatives

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TO : Dr. Mike Beirne, Chairman
House HESS Committee

FROM: Albert P. Adams, Chairman
House Finance Committee

DATE: March 16, 1982

SUBJ: HB 761 -- RELATING TO TEACHER'S RETIREMENT

HB 761 provides that teachers who devote 15 years to teaching in rural Alaska communities, with populations of less than 4000, will be able to retire with full benefits. At present the law requires 20 years of service as a prerequisite to full retirement.

The bill addresses the need to establish an equality of incentive and opportunity for teachers to accept and continue in bush teaching positions. The effect of the bill will be to offset the inherent disparities between rural and urban teachers working conditions and professional advancement opportunities.

It is clear that rural Alaskan communities experience a far greater teacher turnover than do urban areas. The resulting lack of continuity in education is detrimental to the best interests of rural Alaskans.

This bill is an attempt to achieve equality rather than provide a subsidy. The cost is small when compared to the benefits of stable, quality, equal education for all Alaskans.

I have attached a section of the report recently completed by the REAA Budget Oversight Committee. The committee solicited comments from school districts on teacher turnovers and retention and the problems and efforts the districts are making in retaining quality teachers. I'm hopeful HB 761 will provide one more incentive for teachers to continue in our rural areas.

APA/dlk