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COMMITTEE REPORT

SENATE

3/15/82

FURTHER: Finance

Date: 4-21-82

Mr. President: HEALTH, EDUCATION & SOCIAL SERVICES

SB 858

The Committee on \_\_\_\_\_ has had \_\_\_\_\_ licensing of child care facilities and certification of pre-elementary school programs

under consideration and (a majority of the committee) (the committee) reports it back with the following recommendations:

- do pass  do not pass
- do pass with attached amendments(s)
- replace with CS for \_\_\_\_\_  same title  
 new title
- and recommends \_\_\_\_\_
- AND attaches a "Letter of Intent"  New Fiscal Note
- reports it back without recommendation
- referred to the \_\_\_\_\_ Committee

MEMBERS SIGNING DO PASS

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MEMBERS HAVING OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS:

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\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

CHAIRMAN

# STATE OF ALASKA

**DEPT. OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES**  
**OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER**

JAY S. HAMMOND, GOV. JR

POUCH H 01  
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99811  
PHONE: 465-3030

DOCUMENT NO. 138-82

April 12, 1982

The Honorable Charles Parr  
Chairman, Senate HESS Committee  
Alaska State Legislature  
Pouch V  
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Senator Parr:

Enclosed please find copies of the audit of preschool programs in our state prepared by the Office of the Governor, Division of Internal Audit. The audit indicated a problem with coordination of licensing of preschools. Senate Bill 858, which is currently before your committee, was introduced to resolve this concern. We believe that copies of the audit may be useful in your committee's deliberations of SB 858. Enclosed are 5 copies for your committee's use.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide this material to you.

Sincerely,



Helen D. Beirne  
Commissioner

Enclosures

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 858

from Dr. Marjorie Fields  
President, S.E. Alaska affiliate  
of the  
National Association for the Education of Young Children  
and  
Early Childhood Education Program Coordinator University of Alaska Juneau.

Right now we have children all over the state of Alaska in preschool programs that are not only unlicensed, but are also not safe or appropriate environments for youngsters. This situation will continue without the passage of this bill, which provides minimum safeguards for children in all early childhood programs, whether providing primarily child care or primarily educational services.

The Department of Health and Social Services has reasonable and enforceable licensing standards for child care facilities, which no programs for young children should be able to circumvent. However, for years programs which called themselves preschools rather than child care centers have been able to circumvent these standards, and have been crowding large numbers of active children into small spaces with too few adults for proper supervision.

The Department of Health and Social Services and the Department of Education have come to an agreement about how this problem can be solved. Their plan of licensing for all early childhood programs through the Health and Social Services child care licensing standards, with Department of Education standards as additional requirements for preschool certification, is a plan which has won the endorsement of the statewide affiliate of the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Monitoring programs to ensure adequate protection for Alaska's young children will require additional personnel. Though this will cost money, it will finally allow the state to meet its obligation to its youngest citizens.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES  
POSITION PAPER

SENATE BILL NO. 858

"An Act relating to the licensing of child care facilities and certification of pre-elementary programs; and providing for an effective date."

The Department of Education and the Department of Health and Social Services support Senate Bill No. 858, which will change the statutory requirements of the two departments in the licensing and certification of pre-elementary school programs.

The statutory changes and the resultant procedures for meeting the statutory requirements will address the issues identified in the report by the Division of Internal Audit entitled "The Department of Education Needs to Improve Management of Preschool Programs." The changes provide a definition for pre-elementary school programs and ensure that standards for basic care, protection, adequate program, and opportunities for development are applied uniformly for all populations of preschool children receiving services in public and private child care facilities. The changes also ensure that educational standards have been met by facilities certified as pre-elementary schools.

The major proposed change in the Department of Education's statute is a redefinition of pre-elementary schools. This change also brings basic care and protection to children in these schools under the licensing authority of the Department of Health and Social Services.

Under the proposed statutes, the Department of Education will certify pre-elementary school programs. Certification will be voluntary. The standards employed in the certification process will be developed by a task force made up of representatives from the Department of Education, the Department of Health and Social Services, and the Department of Community and Regional Affairs. The task force will also include persons from the regional chapters of the National Association for the Education of Young Children and others involved in early childhood education. A peer monitoring approach will be employed in the certification process.

The major proposed change in the licensing statute administered by the Department of Health and Social Services is in the definitions. The term "nursery" has been changed to "child care center" and "child care home." The exemption for programs that are primarily educational is eliminated. The other proposed facility definitions are updated to more accurately represent the different kinds of facilities subject to the statute. Another proposed change would extend the licensing requirements to facilities operated by municipalities, including all public school district operated pre-school programs and before and after school care programs for school aged children who are regularly in care for more than seven hours per day.

POSITION PAPER

SENATE BILL NO. 858


PAGE 2

The Department of Health and Social Services recommends three amendments to the Bill. AS 47.35.040 in the licensing statute should also be amended by the insertion of the word "facility" in two places, and the removal of the terms "boarding home, foster home, group home, nursery, or institution." Section 7 on Page 3, Line 29, of the Bill should be changed to be a repeal of the existing terms in the licensing statute. AS 47.35.080 should be re-enacted in Section 7 to include the updated definitions of the different kinds of facilities that are listed on Page 4 of the Bill. Finally, the definition for a "residential child care facility" should be changed to mean a place rather than a facility that provides 24-hour care for a child unrelated by blood, marriage, or adoption to the operator of the facility. These suggested changes should bring about greater internal consistency in the Bill and improve clarity by eliminating definitions that are no longer needed.

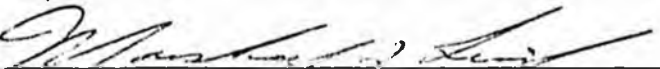
A survey conducted by the Division of Internal Audit resulted in a listing of 127 pre-schools which are not currently licensed by the Department of Health and Social Services nor certified by the Department of Education. There are an additional 31 head start operations that were not included in the listing, for a total of 158 pre-school facilities that are not licensed or certified. A significant number of pre-school sites are in rural locations. This additional licensing workload will require the equivalent of three full time licensing specialists.

The revised statutes will reduce the risk to children receiving care in unregulated facilities. They will ensure that basic standards for care, protection, adequate program, and opportunities for development are equally applied to all facilities.

The licensing of facilities by the Department of Health and Social Services and the certification of pre-elementary school programs by the Department of Education will provide a measure of parent-consumer protection and protection for children not existent under the current statutes.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Helen D. Beirne, Commissioner  
Department of Health and Social Services

3-22-02  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Marshall Lind, Commissioner  
Department of Education

3/22/02  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA  
TWELFTH LEGISLATURE

FISCAL NOTE

I. REQUEST

Bill/Resolution No. Senate Bill No. 858  
Title Licensing of Child Care Facilities & Certification of Pre-Schools  
Requested by HESS Committee Date 03/15/82

II. FISCAL DETAIL

Agency Affected Department of Health and Social Services  
Program Category Affected Social Services  
BRU, Program, Or Subprogram(s) Affected Family Services BRU  
(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
100 PERSONAL SERVICES		118.3	128.9	140.5	153.1	166.9
200 TRAVEL		20.0	21.8	23.8	25.9	28.2
300 CONTRACTUAL		12.2	13.3	14.5	15.8	17.2
400 COMMODITIES		1.4	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.9
500 EQUIPMENT		4.8	0	0	0	0
600 LAND & STRUCTURES		0	0	0	0	0
700 GRANTS, CLAIMS, ETC.		0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL		156.7	165.5	180.4	196.5	214.2

FUNDING (Thousands of Dollars)

	FY 82	FY 83	FY 84	FY 85	FY 86	FY 87
GENERAL FUND		156.7	165.5	180.4	196.5	214.2
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER (Specify Source)						

POSITIONS

	FY 82	FY 83	FY 84	FY 85	FY 86	FY 87
FULL TIME		2	2	2	2	2
PART TIME		2	2	2	2	2
TEMPORARY						

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

Enactment of this Bill will require establishment of the following positions to license the estimated 150 preschool programs currently not regulated:

Southcentral Region - 1-FT Community Care Licensing Specialist I  
Northern Region - 1-FT Community Care Licensing Specialist I  
Southeastern Region - 1-PT Community Care Licensing Specialist I  
Southern Region - 1-PT Community Care Licensing Specialist I

For the Western Region and the Northwestern Region, existing staff will be required to license more facilities, necessitating increased travel, contractual, and commodity expenditures.

IV. DATE 2/24/82

PREPARED BY John R. Pugh, Director  
AGENCY Division of Family & Youth Services  
PHONE 465-3170

Original: Legislative Finance  
cc: Budget and Management  
Prime Sponsor (First Legislator Named)  
33-001 (Rev. 12/81)

fcc

FY 83 - Community Care Licensing Specialist I, Range 16

	SCRO	NRO	SERO	SRO	WRO	NWRO	TOTAL
100 Personal Services	37.5	43.2	18.8	18.8	0	0	118.3
200 Travel	5.0	6.5	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.5	20.0
300 Contractual Telephone Copier Usage Office Space	3.1	3.1	2.9	2.9	.1	.1	12.2
400 Commodities	.4	.4	.2	.2	.1	.1	1.4
500 Equipment Desk Chair Files	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	0	0	4.8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>47.2</b>	<b>54.4</b>	<b>25.1</b>	<b>25.1</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>156.7</b>

SCRO 1 FT

100 Personal Services	Salary \$2463. per mo. x 12 Benefits 665. per mo. x 12	\$29,556.00 7,980.00 <u>\$37,536.00</u>	37.5
200 Travel	License Review and Studies 15 Communities	\$5,000.00	5.0
300 Contractual	Telephone @ \$10. per mo. x 12 Copier Usage @ \$20. per mo. x 12 Office Space	\$ 120.00 240.00 2,700.00 <u>\$3,060.00</u>	3.1
400 Commodities	General Office Supplies	\$400.00	.4
500 Equipment	Desk Chair File Cabinet	\$ 575.00 257.00 337.00 <u>\$1,169.00</u>	1.2
			<hr/> 47.2

NRO 1 FT

100 Personal Services	Salary \$2,838. per mo. x 12 Benefits 766. per mo. x 12	\$34,056.00 9,192.00 <u>\$43,248.00</u>	43.2
200 Travel	License and Review Studies 13 Communities	\$6,500.00	6.5
300 Contractual	Telephone @ \$10. per mo. x 12 Copier Usage @ \$20. per mo. x 12 Office Supplies	\$ 120.00 240.00 2,700.00 <u>\$3,060.00</u>	3.1

400 Commodities	General Office Supplies	\$400.00	.4
500 Equipment	Desk	\$ 575.00	
	Chair	257.00	
	File Cabinet	337.00	
		<u>\$1,169.00</u>	1.2
			<hr/> 54.4

SRO AND SERO - 1/2 TIME

100 Personal Services	Salary \$2463. per mo. x 6	\$14,778.00	
	Benefits 665. per mo. x 6	3,990.00	
		<u>\$18,768.00</u>	18.8
200 Travel	License Studies and Reviews	\$2,000.00	2.0
300 Contractual	Telephone @ \$10./mo. x 12	\$ 120.00	
	Copier Usage @ \$10./mo. x 12	120.00	
	Office Space	2,700.00	
		<u>\$2,940.00</u>	2.9
400 Commodities	General Office Supplies	\$ 200.00	.2
500 Equipment	Desk	\$ 575.00	
	Chair	257.00	
	File Cabinet	337.00	
		<u>\$1,169.00</u>	1.2
			<hr/> 25.1

WRO AND NWRO - NO NEW POSITIONS

100 Personal Services		0
200 Travel	NWRO	2.5
	WRO	2.0
300 Contractual	Copier Usage @ 5/mo. x 12	.1
400 Commodities	General Office Supplies	.1
500 Equipment		0

## COMMUNITY CARE FACILITY LICENSING

The intent of the licensing program is to provide equal protection and opportunity to children and dependent adults who must spend part of the day away from their families or who must live apart from their families. Licensing establishes a floor of quality which must be enforced equally ensuring a basic level of care and protection, adequate programs, and opportunity for development. The rights of those regulated include the right to notice of the requirements, notice of non-compliances and reasonable time limits for corrections, receiving information on how to achieve correction, and access to administrative hearings and court decisions. The Division also offers substantial technical assistance to new programs and to programs that have experienced difficulties following licensure.

The licensing process is relatively lengthy. In some communities there are monthly or semi-monthly meetings to familiarize potential applicants with licensing requirements and procedures. An applicant then submits an application form and supporting documents which may include a report of a tuberculosis test, references, occasionally a report of a physical examination, and authorization to conduct a criminal history check. In home-sized facilities the applicant is then visited by a licensing specialist who inspects the home and discusses the applicants plans to meet the nutrition, health, and developmental needs of persons in care, handling emergencies, methods of dealing with parents in family day care and agency expectations in foster homes. For the larger facilities the specialist also requests inspections by appropriate fire safety and environmental health authorities.

The on-site program assessment is more complex. It necessitates interviews with the operator, staff, residents, and children, when appropriate. File reviews are also conducted to assess whether staff meet personnel qualifications and if children's records are in order. Generally, within 60 days of receipt of an application and after the study and inspection to verify compliance with standards, a license is issued. There are no fees for a State license.

Licensing studies are performed largely by community care specialists located in the Division's six regional offices. A few are performed by Division field office staff and approved public and private agency staff for child foster homes. The number of facilities per specialist does not properly reflect the community care licensing specialists' load. In January, 1982, there were 1,156 licensed facilities with a capacity of 8,943. The turnover rate of new facilities coming on (opening ??) and facilities closing is 50% of the total facilities over a one year period. The number of licenses that will require an age or capacity, amendment during one year is 25%. Two-thirds (2/3) of the facilities are provisionally licensed first and then converted to annual licensure. In addition, 64 waiver requests were processed during 1981 and 134 complaint/allegations were investigated. A load of 50 facilities per specialist is as high as is considered appropriate, given the turnover rate, the necessity to provide technical assistance, process amendments and waivers, and investigate complaints. In the Northern Region, the Southern Region, and the Southeast Region, specialists are carrying a facility load which is double what is considered acceptable to be able to ensure adequate protection to persons in care.

Specialists also provide professional consultation to facilities and agencies to upgrade the quality of services. Because of their unique position of knowledge about community facilities, they also serve as referral resources to families, social service staff, and others in selecting an appropriate facility for an individual child or adult and in stimulating related community support services for facilities and agencies.

COMMUNITY CARE LICENSING SPECIALIST FACILITY LOADS

STATEWIDE

<u>Month</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Facilities</u>	<u>Capacity</u>
January	1977	895	5,646
	1978	Unknown	Unknown
	1979	Unknown	Unknown
January	1980	1,039	7,042
January	1981	1,055	7,557
January	1982	1,156	8,943

Turnover rate of facilities closing and opening in one year - 50%  
 License amendments age capacity in one year - 25%  
 Facilities in provision status prior to conversion to  
 annual license - 66 2/3%  
 Waivers in one year - 5%

Specialist loads listed below do not include the turnover rate, license amendments, and provisional licensing.

SOUTHCENTRAL REGION

<u>Month</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Facilities</u>	<u>Capacity</u>
January	1980	471	
January	1981	523	
January	1982	586	5,206

Specialist Loads - Seven (7) Specialists

161 Family Day Care Homes Anchorage (152), Wasilla (9); Region Total 178  
 60 Day Care Centers  
 21 Residential Child Care Facilities  
 25 Adult Residential Care Facilities  
 126 Child Foster Homes Anchorage (83), Wasilla (43); Region Total 302  
393 56.14 Facilities/Specialist

NOTE: 58% of the State's licensed capacity is in Anchorage. 51% of the facilities.

Complaint Investigations - Anchorage, 1981

22 FDC Licensed  
 18 FDC Not Licensed  
 29 DCC  
 5 RCCF  
 13 CFH  
 5 ARCF  
92

NWRO

One (1) Specialist

1980	92 Facilities
1981	50 Facilities
1982	41 Facilities

1	FDC
2	DCC
2	RCCF
1	ARCF
35	CFH (15) Outside of Nome
<u>41</u>	<u>Specialist</u>

No complaint investigation reports received for 1981.

SERO

One (1) Specialist (NOTE: Using  $\frac{1}{2}$  time Social Worker II for family day care licensing. Worker also has a full case load.)

1980	108
1981	103
1982	135

16	DCC
60	FDC
4	RCCF
47	CFH (7) Outside of Juneau
1	ARCF
<u>128</u>	<u>Specialist</u>

No complaint investigation reports received for 1981.

WRO

One (1) Specialist

1980	125 Facilities
1981	106 Facilities
1982	71 Facilities

0	FDC
0	DCC (2 City Licensed)
58	CFH (6) Outside of Bethel
3	RCCF
2	ARCF
<u>63</u>	<u>Specialist</u>

No complaint investigation reports received for 1981.

NRO

Two (2) Specialists

1980	132 Facilities
1981	194 Facilities
1982	228 Facilities
79	FDC
22	DCC (1) City Licensed
76	CFH (i21) Region Total
4	RCCF
2	ARCF
<u>183</u>	<u>91.51/Specialist</u>

Complaint Investigations for Fairbanks, 1981

9	FDC
7	CFH
13	DCC
<u>29</u>	<u>Total</u>

SRO

One (1) Specialist

1980	66 Facilities
1981	83 Facilities
1982	95 Facilities
7	DCC
30	FDC
3	RCCF
1	ARCF
54	FH
<u>95</u>	<u>Specialist</u>

SCHOOLS FROM THE  
SURVEY RESPONSES - DISTRICTS

PRESCHOOL NAME	ADDRESS	TELEPHONE #
<u>AVCP OR RURAL CAP RUN</u>		
T&H Early Childhood Program	Craig, AK 99921	907-826-3240
Russian Mission	Russian Mission, AK 99657	
Marshall	Marshall, AK 99585	
Pilot Station	Pilot Station, AK 99650	
Mt. Village	Mt. Village, AK 99632	
Alakanuh	Alakanuh, Ak 99554	
Emmorak	Emmorak, AK 99581	
Kotlik	Kotlik, AK 99620	
Sheldon Point	Sheldon Point, AK 99666	
Scammon Bay	Scammon Bay, AK 99662	
Hooper Bay	Hooper Bay, AK 99604	
King Cove School	Box 6 King Co. AK 99612	497-2354
Kiddie Kare, Inc.	Haines, AK 99827	766-2155
St. Marys Preschool I	St. Marys, AK 99658	438-2311
St. Marys Preschool II	St. Marys, AK 99658	438-2311
Totem land	2711 2nd/Box 8832	225-5005
	Ketchikan, AK 99901	or 225-3619
Kiddie Kollege Dayschool	3405 Baranof	225-2891
	Ketchikan, AK 99901	
The Nest Preschool	342 Stedman/Box 5157	225-4815
	Ketchikan, AK 99901	
Involved Parents Preschool	Bethel, AK 99559	543-2007
Bethel Social Services	Bethel, AK 99559	543-2447
Daycare		
AVCP Alaska Village	Bethel, AK 99559	543-3121
Council Presidents Preschool		
Bristol Bay Borough Preschool	P.O. Box 169	246-4225
	Nanek, AK 99633	
Wrangell Cooperative	Box 1411, Wrangell, AK	874-3141
Yakutat Preschool	Box 427, Yakutat, 99689	784-3318
Nome Preschool	Nome, AK	443-2943
Taracross	Taracross, AK 99776	
Walter Northway	Northway, AK 99764	883-6301
Barbara's Daycare	General Delivery Palmer	376-3471
Childrens Home	Palmer/Wasilla Ak	376-5924
		or 745-3318
Helens Day Care	Box 184 Wasilla AK	376-5845
Hobby Horse House	Box 590, Wasilla AK	376-2510
Don & Marian Huseby	SRB Box 178, Palmer AK	745-2371
Jans Nursery	Box 1223, Palmer AK	745-4419
Kiddie Kollege	Box 41, Palmer, AK	745-3889
Cynthia Thornlow	Box 253, Auklet, AK	745-4788
Willow Preschool		495-6252
Nenana Preschool	P.O. Box 127 Heanna, AK	832-5484
Community Schools	99760	
Bunnel House Child Care	316 Eielson Bldg. U of A	479-7335
	403 Salcha Fairbanks, Ak 99701	

Childcraft Center	250 C St. Fairbanks 99701	452-4820
College Day	Box 80962 Fbks. Ak 99701	479-2778
Discovery Center	1007 Evergreen Fbks 99701	456-7887
Eneput Childrens Center	Box 80452 College, AK 99708	479-6844
FBKS Native Association Inc. (JOM)	310½ First Ave., Fbks, AK 99701	452-1648
FBKS Montessori Association	Box 981 Fbks, Ak 99701	479-2118
Family Headstart Assoc.	Box 724 Federal Station Fairbanks, Ak 99701	356-1212
First Baptist Church	Box 55249 North Pole, Ak 99705	488-2240
Child Development Center		
Hamilton Acres Baptist School	138 Farewell, Fbks, AK 99701	456-5995
Hutchinson DayCare	3750 Geist Fbks, AK 99701	479-2240
Lighthouse Christian Academy	2 mile Steese Highway Fairbanks, AK 99701	456-1781
Play-N-Learn Inc.	5477th Ave, Fbks, AK 99701	452-5997
Play-N-Learn Inc. West	¼ mile Chence Pump Fbks 99701	479-5711
Young Learner Preschool	Box 80962, College, AK 99708	479-2778
Young Learner II Preschool	SR 40581 Fbks. AK 99701	479-5044
Wee Day Care	2830 Airport Way, Fbks	456-7560
Angoon Preschool(JOM)	Angoon Ak.	
Sand Point (JOM)	Box 158 Sand Point, AK 99661	383-2696
Allakaket (JOM)	Allakaket, AK 99720	968-8001
Hughes (JOM)	Hughes, AK 99745	889-8001
Huslia (Rural Cap)(JOM)	Huslia, AK 99746	829-8001
Kaltag (Tanana Chiefs)	Kaltag, AK 99748	534-8001
Noyukuk (JOM)	Noyukuk, AK 99754	927-8001
Minto (JOM)	Minto, AK 99758	798-8001
Ruby (Tanana Chief)	Ruby, AK 99768	468-4465
Ketchikan Headstart	P.O. Box 6135, Ketchikan AK 99901	225-5710
North Slope Borough District		
Kawerak Headstart Program	Nome, AK	443-2513
Arctic Village Preschool (JOM)	Arctic Village, AK 99222	587-8001
Chalkyitsh Preschool	Chalkyitsh, AK	848-8001
Circle Preschool	Circle, Ak 99733	773-1250
Ft. Yukon Preschool	Box 129, Ft. Yukon, AK 99740	662-2352
Stevens Village Preschool	Stevens Village, AK 99774	478-8001
Venetie Preschool	Venetie , Ak 99781	849-8001
Kake Headstart	Kake, AK	785-3303
Ketchikan School District	White Cliff Elementary/Handicapped	
Hoonah Headstart	General Delivery Hoonah, AK	945-3255
Southeast Island School Dis.	Box 8340 Ketchikan, AK	225-9658
St. Paul Island (JOM)		
St. George Island (JOM)		
<u>ESEA TITLE 1 FUNDING</u>		
Aleknagik North Slope	Aleknagik, AK 99555	842-5681
Koliganek	Koliganek, AK 99576	596-8001
Manokotak	Manokotak, AK 99628	842-5978

New Stugahok	Stugahok, AK 99636	693-8001
Togiak ESEA TITLE 1 Fund.	Togiak, AK 99678	974-8001
Headstart Nursery	Haines, AK 99827	766-2155
Petersburg Preschool	Box 289, Petersburg, AK	772-4786
Ambler School ECE	Ambler, Ak	445-2154
Buckland School ECE	Buckland, Ak	449-2127
Deering School ECE	Deering, Ak	363-2121
Kiana School ECE	Kiana, AK	475-2195
McQueen School ECE	Kiualina, AK	645-2125
Kobuk School ECE	Kobuk, Ak	948-8001
Kotzebue Elem. School ECE	Kotzrbue, AK	442-3342
Noatak School ECE	Noatak, AK	485-2135
Noorvik School ECE	Noorvik, AK	636-2100
Selawik School ECE	Selawik, AK	484-2142
Shungnak School ECE	Shungnak, AK	437-2151
Kotzebue Parent Child Center	Kotzebue, AK	442-3157

#### DISTRICT OPERATED

Shishmaref preschool	Shishmaref, AK 99772	649-3601
White Mountain School	White Mountain, AK 99784	625-8001
Koyuk	Koyuk, Ak 99753	965-8001
Wales Preschool	Wales, Ak 99783	664-3123
Teller Preschool	Teller, Ak 99778	642-3161

Hydaburg Headstart	General Delivery Hydaburg, AK 99922	285-3105
Anchorage Montessori Sch.	1200 E. 27th Ave. 99503	276-2240
Carousel Child Care Center	6370 DeBarr Rd 99504	333-1231
East Park Christian School	1711 S. Bragan 99501	333-5279
Grace Baptist Academy	1801 E. 61th Ave. 99507	348-1643
Grace Christian School	Mile 1 Huftman Rd. 99507	345-3741
Hasbrouch's Celestial Daycare	Clestial St., Eagle River 99577	694-9342
Harvester Christian Academy	9101 Brayton Dr. 99557	344-0528
Kee's Kiddie Kare	240 N. Flower 99504	277-8943
Muldoon Christian School	7041 DeBarr Rd. 99504	337-9495
St. Benedict's Preschool	8110 Jewel Lake Rd 99502	248-2641
St. Elizabeth Ann Setan	Huffman & Garden 99507	345-3712
St. Mary's Creative Play	4502 Cassin Dr. 99577	272-8141
Soul Harvest	White Mountain, AK 99784	625-8001
Tom Thumb Montessori	2605 Fbks- 1901 Spenard 99503	272-5033
Anchorage Christian Academy	7145 Madlelynne Dr. 99504	333-1414
Anchorage Christian Schools	6505 DeBarr Rd. 99504	333-5576
Anchorage 7th Day Adventist	SRA Box 1705 99507	344-3237
Faith Lutheran School	5205 Lake Otis Pkwy 99504	344-8977
Peter's Creek Christian	7102 Chapel Dr. 99567	688-2242
Eagle River Christian Academy	P.O. Box 205, Eagle River, AK	694-2089
Lutheran School Association	2100 Boniface Pkway. 99504	338-3838
University Baptist Church	4313 Wright St. 99504	349-5997
Hilcrest Preschool	900 Hollywood Dr. 99511	272-9924
Herman Hutchins/DISTRICT	Valdez	
Juneau Christian School	8001 Glacier Highway Juneau	789-2176
Auke Bay Coop	12 mile Glacier Highway Jun.	789-9318
Children's Community Center	211 Cordova Juneau, Ak	586-6764

St. Ann's Day Care	415 6th Avenue Juneau, AK	586-3883
Wee Cottage	Juneau	789-2611
Glacier Valley Baptist Sch.	2 mi. Mendenhall Loop RD.	789-7348
Northern Lights United Coop	400 W. 11th ST. Juneau	586-3131
Jack-n-Jill Nursery	342 Distin Ave Juneau	586-2980
Valley Baptist Academy	8205 Aspin	
Klawock	Klawock, AK 99925	755-2900
Tiny Tots Child Care Center	P.O. Box 805	895-4240
	Delta, Junction 99737	
Ft. Greely Child Care Center	Ft. Greely, Ak 98733	895-3394

THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION NEEDS TO  
IMPROVE MANAGEMENT OF PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS

FEBRUARY 1982

STATE OF ALASKA  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
DIVISION OF INTERNAL AUDIT



05-41

## SUMMARY

The Department of Education is responsible for preschool programs in the State of Alaska. There are at least 185 early childhood programs in the state that provide preschool services.

This report shows that the Department of Education needs to better manage preschools, and needs to define which early childhood programs should be classified as preschools. The report also shows that the Department needs to set standards for preschools.

### BETTER MANAGEMENT OF PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS IS NEEDED

The Department has certified only 28 early childhood programs as preschools, and has monitored even fewer. Historically, the Department has placed little emphasis on preschools. In addition, deciding which early childhood programs actually are preschools is difficult because the Department has not provided a definition of preschools. The lack of a definition causes confusion for those attempting to manage other child care programs.

### STANDARDS FOR PRESCHOOLS SHOULD BE IMPROVED

The Department has not developed adequate preschool standards. And, although Alaska Statutes require that the Department of Education cooperate with the Department of Health and Social Services in regulating preschools, there has been little cooperation. Inadequate standards lead to inconsistent care for similar populations in preschool and daycare centers, and lessens the value of the preschool certification process.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

To assure that the Department of Education meets their management responsibilities for preschools, we recommend the Commissioner require that:

- preschool programs in Alaska are regulated; and
- preschool programs are monitored to assure compliance with requirements.

To help eliminate the confusion in determining which early childhood programs are preschools, we recommend the Commissioner provide a definition of which early childhood programs are preschools.

To assure that the similar populations in preschool and daycare programs receive consistent care, we recommend the Commissioner of the Department of Education cooperate with the Commissioner of the Department of Health and Social Services in developing health, safety and developmental standards for preschools. We also recommend the Commissioner of the

Department of Education develop standards for the educational component of preschools.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

In response to our draft report, the Commissioner of the Department of Education and the Commissioner of the Department of Health and Social Services agreed with our recommendations and are taking action to improve management of early childhood programs. (See Appendices I and II)

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## INTRODUCTION

There are at least 37,000 children 6 years old or younger in Alaska. Many of these children spend part of their time in organized early childhood programs, such as preschools. Research has produced abundant evidence that a good child development program has significant short and long term effects. Early childhood programs have been found to have a positive effect on a child's self respect, proficiency at learning, achievement and intelligence test scores, reduction of grade failure, and social development. According to a major economic study the benefits of a quality child development program provide a 248 percent return on the original investment.

In the State of Alaska, the Department of Education is responsible for setting preschool standards for a level of care that will insure safety, reduce predictable harm, and provide developmental opportunities. The Department of Health and Social Services is similarly responsible for daycare programs.

### DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION RESPONSIBILITIES

Alaska Statute 14.07.020 provides that the Department of Education, in cooperation with the Department of Health and Social Services, exercise general supervision over public and private preschools and over the educational component of daycare centers, and prescribe regulations that will assure healthful and safe conditions in the schools. The Departments' responsibility is defined in Section 4 of the Alaska Administrative Code 60.010 which requires the Department issue a certificate of approval after:

- conducting an investigation of preschool applicants;
- reviewing the proposed plan of education, mode of operation and supervision of children; and
- investigating whether the programmatic objectives of the preschool are being met.

This regulation also requires that preschools have:

- a valid Department of Education certificate displayed with effective dates;
- insurance;
- a Cumulative Health Record Form and records of immunization of children;
- records of physical exam and records of immunization for staff and volunteer workers;
- a disaster plan;
- documentation, on file with the Department of Education, showing inspections for public safety were made before certification and;
- provided programmatic requirements to the Department of Education.

## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICE RESPONSIBILITIES

The role of the Department of Health and Social Services is to license, investigate and supervise daycare centers; and to issue and enforce regulations. Facilities that are primarily educational are exempt from Department of Health and Social Service regulation.

## OTHER STATE INVOLVEMENT IN PRESCHOOL AND DAYCARE PROGRAMS

The Department of Community and Regional Affairs contracts with local communities to provide daycare assistance to enable parents to work or enter training. In addition, the State, through the Department, provides funds to Federal Head Start programs in Alaska.

The Department of Commerce and Economic Development provides a revolving loan fund to enable daycare facilities to obtain loans when necessary to meet licensing standards.

In addition, the Department of Environmental Conservation and the Department of Public Safety review early childhood programs for compliance with fire and sanitation standards.

## SCOPE OF THE REVIEW

We performed the following steps in reviewing Department of Education's role in exercising general supervision of Alaska's preschools:

- reviewed applicable statutes and administrative procedures;
- interviewed educators, Departmental administrators, and early childhood learning center staff;
- visited preschools;
- reviewed and analyzed documents of the Department of Education and preschools; and
- gathered information by questionnaires to similar programs in other states, and to preschool and daycare centers in Alaska.

## BETTER MANAGEMENT OF PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS IS NEEDED

Historically, the Department of Education has taken little action to manage preschools and has not allocated resources for managing preschools. As a result, the Department has certified and monitored few preschools, which could expose the State to liabilities. In addition, the Department's failure to develop a definition which distinguishes between child care programs and preschools results in confusion for those attempting to manage other child care programs.

### THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION MAKES LITTLE EFFORT TO MANAGE PRESCHOOLS

Little staff time or funds are allocated to performing the Department's statutory obligation in early childhood education. The Department staff member responsible for early childhood education programs is also responsible for guidance and counseling, and private and denominational schools. Only about one eighth of her staff time is allocated to the early childhood program. In addition, the Department of Education budgets show that no funds have been allocated to early childhood programs in the last 5 years.

### FEW PROGRAMS ARE CERTIFIED

The Department of Education certifies few preschool programs. Responses to questionnaires from 41 of Alaska's 52 school districts showed that there are at least 167 preschool programs in the State. Yet, during the past 5 years the Department of Education has certified only 28 programs. In addition, many of the 28 certificates were given without the necessary documentation on file in the Department. For example, of the 28 programs certified, the Department did not have a fire and sanitation inspection report on file for 12 of the programs, did not have documentation of insurance for 18 programs and did not have programmatic requirements for 18 of the programs.

In addition, many daycare centers are offering preschool programs without Department of Education supervision over the educational component. For example, of the 19 daycare programs surveyed, 18 stated they offered a preschool program but were not certified by the Department of Education.

### FEW PROGRAMS ARE MONITORED

The Department is not making onsite visits to monitor the safety, medical records, insurance records or to see if the school is actually implementing a curriculum. The Department has made only about 15 onsite visits in the last 5 years. The early childhood coordinator stated that seven of the onsite visits occurred as a result of a crisis situation and the other reviews were performed on lunch hours while traveling for other reasons.

LIABILITY EXISTS FOR NONPERFORMANCE  
OF STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITY

The concept of "State Certification" implies to the public that:

- the preschool is, in fact, an education institution; and
- the State, through the appropriate agency, has determined the preschool to be in compliance with appropriate laws and regulations.

In a November 1980 memo to the Department of Law, the Commissioner of Health and Social Services expressed concern about the number of unregulated preschools. The Commissioner stated in the memo that the problem of unregulated preschools causes unequal application of the law and has the following results:

1. Lowering respect for Alaska statutes in general.
2. Enforcement problems for this Department. Programs quickly call themselves pre-elementary schools when they learn that is a means of escaping regulations.
3. Risk to children in unregulated pre-elementary schools.
4. A large early childhood population subject to immunization regulations but not receiving the immunizations.

In response, the Department of Law noted that:

"This office understands that the Department of Education does not now investigate facilities applying for certification and does not supervise the physical examination of immunization requirements. Nor is the department involved in monitoring of other health and safety codes.

Even assuming that there are no certifiable pre-elementary schools in Alaska, the department's records should reflect that applications have been submitted and that investigations have taken place sufficient to determine that the Department of Education finds that no facility is a pre-elementary school or a day care facility with an education component."

The Department of Laws' advisor to the Department of Education told us that the Department of Education has been designated to perform a responsibility and currently is not performing it. Failure to perform where there is a duty to perform, can place the State in a position of exposure to liability.

PRESCHOOLS ARE NOT DEFINED

Alaska Statute 14.07.020 (8) provides that the Department of Education "...exercise general supervision over public and private pre-elementary

schools...when the school's primary function is educational." Alaska Statute 47.35.010-80 provides that the Department of Health and Social Services license..."an establishment providing care and services for any part of the 24-hour day for a child... but does not include any establishment whose primary purpose is educational." Neither of the statutes set criteria nor define what is to be considered a primarily educational facility versus a child care facility.

In 1975, the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (Federal Office of Child Development) commented in a letter to the Department of Health and Social Services that "Your statute is indeed weak, allowing for confusion and almost any interpretation..." The letter said that the most difficult job for the two Departments was the formulation of a clear and full definition of a facility whose function is "primarily educational", and the Departments should work towards better statutes and a clarification of the primarily educational function. The letter said a definition is needed so each applicant will know whether or not the law applied to their program and so each Department has a positive definition to use in deciding whether or not a facility is in their area of responsibility.

Even though the statute is weak, the Department could take action to establish standards and a definition of preschools, but they have not done so. In 1971, the Attorney General stated that a determination must be made whether a given school is actually primarily educational, and the "Department of Education...may define what type of program or programs is primarily educational."

#### RESPONSIBILITY FOR REGULATION IS NOT CLEAR

Because primarily educational has not been defined, neither the regulatory Departments, the facilities themselves, nor the public has a positive definition to use in deciding whether or not a program is a preschool or daycare program. As a result, any facility may choose to be classified as a preschool, and avoid the requirement to comply with daycare standards. For example, 8 of the 28 certified preschools provide daycare services but do not have to comply with daycare standards because they chose to be certified as preschools.

This problem also creates confusion for regulatory agencies. At locations where both preschool and daycare services are provided, the Department of Health and Social Services has found it difficult to determine compliance because two different standards are used. For example, children in the Department of Education regulated preschool program often intermingle with children in the Department of Health and Social Services regulated daycare program, thereby changing the acceptable staff pupil ratio.

In addition, the Municipality of Anchorage also has difficulty issuing accurate, legal and meaningful permits because some child care centers are providing services regulated by their ordinance and services regulated by the Department of Education.

The Department of Health and Social Services and the Municipality of Anchorage told us that the regulatory confusion also results in some early childhood programs being unregulated. For example, we found 36 early childhood programs unregulated by either the Department of Health and Social Services or the Department of Education.

## STANDARDS FOR PRESCHOOLS SHOULD BE IMPROVED

The Department of Education's preschool standards do not assure that certified preschools provide quality educational programs in a safe and healthy setting. Alaska Statutes require that the Department of Education cooperate with the Department of Health and Social Services in regulating preschools, but cooperation has not occurred. In addition, the statutes do not give the Department authority to enforce standards. Inadequate standards lead to inconsistent care for similar populations in preschools and daycare centers. Also, the value of the preschool certification process is questionable because of the inadequate standards.

### PRESCHOOL STANDARDS IN ALASKA ARE INADEQUATE

Preschool standards should assure that certified preschools provide quality educational programs in a safe and healthy setting. But, the Department of Education has not established educational standards for preschools. In addition, the Department's health and safety standards for preschools are lower than the standards the Department of Health and Social Services has established for daycare centers.

### Standards are Needed to Assure Quality Preschool Programs

According to Federal and national association authorities in the field of child care and development, there are two levels of standards. First, there is licensing, which is the base level and assures that a program or facility meets health, safety and child development standards.

The second level generally supplements basic licensing and is designed to assure quality where a specialized service, such as education, is being offered. Thus, a facility providing child care should be licensed, while a facility operating as a preschool should have a child care license plus be certified as a preschool.

### Educational Standards Have Not Been Developed

The Department of Education has not developed specific educational standards for preschools. The Department only requires that preschools provide written information concerning the schools philosophy and goals. Examples of standards that many states have set for preschools are those relating to teacher certification and space requirements.

#### Teacher Certification

According to education authorities the quality of the staff determines, to a high degree, the excellence of an educational program. For example, The Teacher Education Committee of the Association for

Childhood Education International has recommended that teachers of children three through eight years of age:

- should have study in the areas of physical and biological sciences, mathematics and philosophy, language and literature, the social and behavioral sciences, and the fine arts.
- should have a minimum of twenty-four semester hours of professional preparation in the field of early childhood education,
- should have supervisory experience with young children, and
- should be required to take refresher courses and to keep active affiliation with professional organizations.

In a recent survey of 26 states, 17 said they require separate certification, four said they require a separate early childhood endorsement, and five said they currently have no requirement on early childhood teacher certification.

Alaska is one of the five states surveyed that does not require any early childhood training as a prerequisite for teaching children under age six. The Department of Education allows any person 19 years old or over, or any student who is age 16 and enrolled in a training program, to be a staff member.

#### Space

National experts advise that an adequate amount of space available for children's activities is absolutely necessary to ensure a quality, developmentally-orientated child care program. For example, research has shown that space effects the quality of living and learning within a center:

"the higher the quality of space in a center, the more likely were teachers to be sensitive and friendly in their manner toward children, to encourage children in their self chosen activities, and to teach consideration for the rights and feelings of self and others. Where spatial quality was low, children were less likely to be involved and interested, and teachers more likely to be neutral and insensitive in their manner, to use large amounts of guidance and restriction, and to teach arbitrary rules of social living."

In addition, tendencies towards social versus aggressive behavior has been found to be effected by space and according to a research study report:

"Several studies have found that most social involvement appears to occur at medium density (35-50 sq. ft.), while aggressiveness occurs at higher densities (below 35 sq. ft.) and random behavior occurs in large, undifferentiated settings (over 50 sq. ft. per child)."

Eight of the ten states who responded to our survey on this question required a minimum of 35 square feet per child. The Department of Education has not established space requirements for preschools in Alaska.

Preschool Standards are Lower Than Daycare Standards

In Alaska, the Department of Education's standards for preschools are lower than the Department of Health and Social Services standards for daycare centers. For example, the only preschool standard equal to daycare standards is the immunization standard as shown in the following table.

COMPARISON OF DAYCARE AND PRESCHOOL STANDARDS

<u>STANDARD</u>	<u>DAYCARE</u>	<u>PRESCHOOLS</u>
License Renewal	Annual	5 yrs.
Agency Review	Annual	5 yrs.
Staff Pupil Ratio	1-10	no standard
Indoor Space	35 sq. ft.per child	no standard
Outdoor space	75 sq. ft.per child	no standard
Fire Inspection	Annual	5 years
Sanitation Inspection	Annual	5 years
Health Program	required	no standard
Prone Rest	required	no standard
Immunizations	required	required
Nutrition Program	required	no standard
Corporal Punishment	regulated	no standard

The Department of Health and Social Services also requires that daycare programs provide opportunities and experiences to promote the individual child's physical, emotional, social and intellectual growth, as outlined below:

- opportunities for balance of active/quiet play, group and individual, and indoor and outdoor play;
- opportunities for individual self expression in conversation. imaginative play and creative expressions;
- use of games, toys, books, sand, puzzles, for intellectual and social development;
- walking excursions/field trips; and
- equipment and furniture be of sufficient quality and quantity and appropriate to a child's use.

COOPERATION IN DEVELOPING PRESCHOOL STANDARDS HAS NOT OCCURRED

Alaska Statutes require that the Department of Education cooperate with the Department of Health and Social Services in the general supervision

and development of regulations for preschools. Officials of both Departments say they have not coordinated to develop standards or a monitoring system.

The Department of Health and Social Services, however, has attempted to cooperate but has received little or no response from the Department of Education. For example, in 1972 the Department of Health and Social Services made recommendations to the Department of Education on the content and need for clear, enforceable standards and a means of clarifying between a preschool and daycare facility. However, the Department of Education removed the regulatory language recommended by the Department of Health and Social Services and promulgated regulations without a clarification of preschools and daycare facilities.

The Department of Health and Social Services has since made three other attempts to cooperate with the Department of Education but little cooperation has occurred between the two Departments.

#### DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION NEEDS ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITY

The Department of Education does not have power to close schools which do not meet standards. Because they have no enforcement power, the Department has limited power to correct problems. For example, in 1980 several problems, such as a lack of space, were noted in a preschool evaluation. However, according to two evaluators, correction of the problems was optional because the Department of Education does not have adequate standards and because there is no penalty for non-compliance even if there were standards.

In contrast, Alaska Statute 47.35.010-080 provides the Department of Health and Social Services with authority to close a facility and penalize the responsible party who does not comply with established standards. Anyone operating a child care facility without a license is guilty of a misdemeanor and subject to a fine.

According to a U.S. Childrens Bureau official, child care agencies in all but one other state have enforcement authority.

#### CARE IS INCONSISTENT

Because preschool standards are inadequate, similar populations are receiving inconsistent care. For example, we visited two programs that were certified as preschools and provided all day care. Since they were classified as preschools they were not required to meet daycare standards of 35 square feet per child, and a maximum of 10 children per staff member. One of the programs provided about 21 square feet per child, and had 20 children with one staff member. The other program provided about 17 square feet per child and had 32 children with only one staff member present.

In addition, some centers that operate all day, have a preschool in one room and in another room a daycare center. The two rooms are regulated by different agencies under different standards even though all day child care is provided in both rooms.

THE VALUE OF ALASKA'S PRESCHOOL  
CERTIFICATION PROCESS IS QUESTIONABLE

Those who are aware of the Department of Education's standards for preschools generally consider the preschool certification process to be meaningless. For example:

- Many of the early childhood educators we interviewed said that because of the Department's inadequate standards, the preschool certificates issued by the Department do not assure a quality preschool program. Certification is, in fact, misleading to parent consumers.
- We interviewed instructors of two early childhood training programs and both teach their students that the Department's standards are not an acceptable standard to assure a quality preschool program.
- We visited one two-hour a day educationally oriented program that chose to be licensed as a day care center rather than a preschool because they thought parents would have no assurance of a quality preschool program if it only complied with the the Department's preschool standards.
- The legislature recently mandated that eligibility for a child care grant program is dependent on compliance with day care licensing standards. Those preschools certified by the Department of Education are not eligible for the grants unless they also have a daycare license.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### CONCLUSIONS

The Department of Education needs to better manage preschool programs. During the past 5 years, the Department certified only 28 preschools and visited for monitoring purposes only 15 preschools. But, our analysis shows that there are at least 167 preschools. And, 18 of 19 daycare programs surveyed said they provided preschool services. In addition, because the Department of Education has not provided a definition of preschools there is confusion for those attempting to manage other early childhood programs.

The Department of Education has not cooperated with the Department of Health and Social Services in developing standards for preschool programs. Currently, there is inconsistent care for similar populations in preschools and daycare programs because preschool standards are lower than daycare standards. Preschools programs should meet daycare standards and should meet additional standards for education.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

To assure that the Department of Education meets their management responsibilities for preschools, we recommend the Commissioner require that:

- preschool programs in Alaska are regulated; and
- preschool programs are monitored to assure compliance with requirements.

To help eliminate the confusion in determining which early childhood programs are preschools, we recommend the Commissioner provide a definition of which early childhood programs are preschools.

To assure that the similar populations in preschools and daycare programs receive consistent care, we recommend the Commissioner of the Department of Education cooperate with the Commissioner of the Department of Health and Social Services in developing health, safety and developmental standards for preschools. We also recommend the Commissioner of the Department of Education develop standards for the educational component of preschool.

### DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

Both the Department of Education and Department of Health and Social Services responded to a draft of this report. Their comments are summarized below and are included as appendices I and II of this report.

### Department of Education

The Commissioner of the Department of Education agreed with our recommendations and listed actions the Department has taken or will take to resolve the problems associated with managing preschool programs. The actions include:

- Developing a tentative agreement with the Department of Health and Social Services and the Department of Community and Regional Affairs for coordination of early childhood programs.
- Introducing a request for statutory change to require all child care programs be licensed by the Department of Health and Social Services for base level standards.
- Development of standards for a voluntary education certification process in addition to the mandatory base level licensing.
- Establishing on site reviews for evaluation of the educational component of certified preschools. (See Appendix I)

### Department of Health and Social Services

The Commissioner of the Department of Health and Social Services agreed with our recommendations and is also in agreement with the plans for improvement as presented by the Department of Education. (See Appendix II)

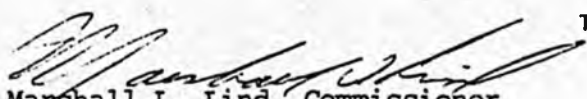
## MEMORANDUM

State of Alaska

TO: John O'Meara, Director  
Division of Internal Audit  
Office of the Governor

DATE: February 2, 1982

FILE NO:

FROM:   
Marshall L. Lind, Commissioner  
Department of Education

TELEPHONE NO: 465-2800

SUBJECT: Response to Draft  
Report

Attached is our response to your draft report titled "The Department of Education Needs to Improve Management of Preschool Programs". As you will note in our response, we are planning a series of actions which will address the conditions described in your report.

You and your staff are to be complimented for the professional manner in which the review was conducted and the report presented. The findings and recommendations are proving useful to us in planning how to better meet our responsibilities for preschool programs.

RECEIVED  
FEB 5 1982

Office of the Governor  
Division of Internal Audit

RESPONSE TO  
THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION NEEDS TO  
IMPROVE MANAGEMENT OF PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS

FEBRUARY 1982

STATE OF ALASKA  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

## INTRODUCTION:

The Department of Education is in basic agreement with the findings of the report by the Division of Internal Audit titled "The Department of Education Needs to Improve Management of Preschool Programs". In responding, therefore, we will make no effort to counter any of the findings of the report. We also believe that nothing would be gained by attempting to present reasons for our past activities in the management of preschool programs. Rather, we will present those actions which have been taken and those planned to address the conditions described in the report.

## ACTIONS TAKEN:

During the past two months we have met several times with a representative from Health and Social Services and once with a representative from Community and Regional Affairs. These meetings have resulted in a tentative agreement between the three departments for the coordination of early childhood programs. We have also met with representatives from the Alaskan chapters of the National Association for the Education of Young Children to discuss plans for the role these chapters might play in the management of preschool programs. A presentation has also been made before the State Board of Education. At this meeting the board voted unanimously to endorse the early childhood education career ladder certification concept. The Board was also advised of tentative plans for carrying out Department of Education responsibilities for preschools.

## ACTIONS PLANNED:

The tentative plan for managing preschool programs consists of the following steps. The conditions from the report, which will be addressed by each step, are presented following the description of each step.

### PROPOSED STEP I:

All day care programs, including those claiming to be preschool programs, will be licensed by the Department of Health and Social Services. This base level of licensing will be mandatory and no programs should be exempt from the licensing requirement.

## CONDITIONS ADDRESSED:

Requiring that all programs which provide services for preschool age children be licensed by Health and Social Services will clear up the confusion which currently exists for regulating agencies, and for the care providers. It will not be necessary to make a predetermination of whether or not a program is "primarily education." Programs will not be able to avoid basic licensing requirements by claiming to be educational programs. The plan will insure that all programs meet basic health, safety and child development standards, and will eliminate instances of inconsistent care for similar populations of children and differential treatment of care providers.

The plan will also negate the need for the Department of Education to obtain the enforcement authority giving it the power to close schools which do not meet basic health and safety standards, since Health and Social Services already has this authority and will be responsible for base level licensing which will insure adequate health and safety standards.

Implementing Step I of the plan will necessitate a change in statute. The Departments of Health and Social Services and Education are currently working cooperatively to determine those required changes. We anticipate that we will be introducing requests for statutory changes during this legislative session.

The change in licensing requirements will also greatly increase the staff load for Department of Health and Social Services licensing personnel. This will not correspond with a decrease for Department of Education personnel, since Department of Education personnel are not currently involved in licensing. Successful implementation will, therefore, require an increase in the Department of Health and Social Services licensing budget.

#### PROPOSED STEP II:

Day care centers wishing to have their educational programs certified will, on a voluntary basis, notify the Department of Education. An on-site review of these facilities will be conducted using a criteria for preschool programs. Those programs successfully meeting the criteria will be certified by the Department of Education.

#### CONDITIONS ADDRESSED:

This step will satisfy the Department of Education's statutory responsibility for certifying preschool programs. It will also provide a definition for preschool programs without making it a condition for base level licensing.

Since the certification process is voluntary only those programs choosing to go beyond base level licensing will do so.

It is anticipated that certification will be at two levels, a basic acceptance level and an exemplary level. We plan to develop an on-site review process which will involve persons from the regional chapters of the National Association for the Education of Young Children as members of the review teams. This will result in a peer monitoring process administered by the Department of Education.

The standards for preschool programs which will be used as the criteria for certification will be developed by a Task Force during the Spring of this year. The Task Force will be made up of persons from the state who are knowledgeable in the area of preschool education and who represent the various groups who will be impacted by the plan for managing preschool programs.

CONCLUSION:

These, then are the activities which have taken place and the plans for future activities which will enable the Department of Education to better manage preschool programs.

We feel that the plans represent a cooperative inter-departmental effort which will result in the coordination and better management of preschool programs as well as early childhood programs in general.

## STATE OF ALASKA

JAY S. HAMMOND, GOVERNOR

**DEPT. OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES**  
**OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER**

POUCH H 01  
 JUNEAU, ALASKA 99811  
 PHONE: 465-3030

February 8, 1982

John O'Meara, Director  
 Division of Internal Audit  
 Office of the Governor  
 Pouch AU  
 Juneau, Alaska 99811

**RECEIVED**  
 FEB 8 1982

Dear Mr. O'Meara:

Office of the Governor  
 Division of Internal Audit

This is in response to your draft report titled "The Department of Education Needs to Improve Management of Preschool Programs." The Department of Health & Social Services is in general agreement with the findings of the audit. The document captures the essence of a serious problem and we are hopeful that the plan developed between the Departments of Education and Health & Social Services will provide corrective action. We have received the Department of Education's response to the audit which outlines that plan.

The Department of Health & Social Services is pleased to have been a participant in recent meetings between representatives of the Departments of Education, Community & Regional Affairs, and Health & Social Services. The dialogue which has begun is extremely useful and the tentative inter-departmental agreement establishes a new precedent of coordinating between three departments around concerns for young children and their families.

The Department of Health & Social Services is in full agreement with proposed Step 1 of the Department of Education's response, that all child care facilities now called Day Care Centers, Family Day Care Homes, and Preschools be licensed under one standard by the Department of Health & Social Services. A recognized principle of government is responsibility to provide equal protection and opportunity to all citizens. For young children who spend part of the day away from their families, the State fulfills this responsibility in part, through licensing to assure a basic level of care and protection, adequate program, and opportunity for development. Licensing under one standard will eliminate the disparity between the care children receive in day care facilities and preschools.

The Department of Health & Social Services is in full agreement that a change of statute is necessary to implement Step 1. In the ten years since the statutes were changed, the disparity has increased rather than decreased. A clear legislative mandate is required to correct a problem of this long standing.

The Department of Health & Social Services will require an increase in staff to perform the licensing studies. Without additional staff the Department of Health & Social Services could not accept the responsibility for an estimated 167 additional programs.

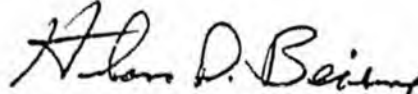
The Department is aware that some programs not now regulated may be fearful that Department of Health & Social Services regulation would result in closure of needed programs. The Department, should it receive the authority, fully intends to implement carefully and in as a supportive manner as possible. Every person or organization whose activities are regulated through licensing has the right to notice of the requirements and an opportunity to comment on them. When there are findings of non-compliances, information for correcting areas of non-compliance will be provided and reasonable time limits for meeting the new standards will be established. It is the Departments' belief that in regulating a new area, two years may be required for full implementation.

The Department of Health & Social Services believes that proposed Step 2 in the Department of Education's response, the certification of educational programs on a voluntary basis, will be well received by providers of early childhood programs. Our experience with day care centers is that directors want to have the educational component of their programs recognized. We are also in agreement that peer monitoring through regional chapters of the National Association for the Education of Young Children is an appropriate role for a professional organization to take and are therefore, in agreement with the Department of Education's plan to use this model.

It is the intent of the Department of Health & Social Services to fully cooperate with the Department of Education in implementing the proposed plan in a timely manner. It is also our intent to continue work on the inter-departmental agreement between the Departments of Education, Community & Regional Affairs, and Health and Social Services for the coordination of Early Childhood programs.

The Division of Internal Audit is to be commended for the careful study given to this important area.

Sincerely,



Helen D. Beirne  
Commissioner