

S B

81

Alaska State Legislature



SENATOR JIM DUNCAN

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(907) 465-4766

COMMITTEES:
FINANCE
VICE CHAIR —
HEALTH EDUCATION
& SOCIAL SERVICES
BUDGET & AUDIT
BANKING &
ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Senator Paul Fischer, Chairman
 Senate Health, Education and Social Services Committee

FROM: Senator Jim Duncan

SUBJECT: SSSB 81, An Act relating to education programs for
 school children who are at risk of withdrawing from
 school before high school graduation; and providing for
 an effective date."

DATE: March 24, 1989

I would appreciate your scheduling SSSB 81, a bill concerning the establishment of education programs for "at risk" youth, for a hearing before the Senate Health, Education and Social Services Committee at your earliest convenience.

This legislation will provide assistance to school districts who are experiencing difficulty with the number of students leaving the school system before graduation. School districts need some assistance to get this situation under control. It is my hope that the program proposed in SSSB 81 will provide that much needed assistance.

I have attached some supporting information which you may wish to include in the Committee's bill files.

I look forward to seeing SSSB 81 on your Committee calendar soon.

PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN AT RISK OF LEAVING SCHOOL

" An Act relating to educational programs for school children who are at risk of withdrawing from school before graduation; and providing for an effective date. "

Section 1.

FINDINGS AND PURPOSE

While students may legally withdraw from high school at the age of 16 there are various reasons for students to dropout of high school before graduation. Among these are unsatisfactory educational experiences, discipline problems, truancy, and any number of family, health, and social problems.

As our society advances many of the advanced skills of yesterday are becoming standard requirements for employment in todays work force. In addition, most jobs will demand a level of basic skill that is seldom attained by students who have failed to finish high school. Opportunities in many jobs, the military, the post secondary educational system, and many industrial training programs are reduced or closed to those without a high school diploma. The lack of a high school diploma or its equivalent may consign students to a greater risk of unemployment or to a lifetime of low level jobs when their real ability is much higher.

This legislation requires the commissioner of education to collect and report information about the number of students withdrawing from school before graduation, and the reasons for their leaving. It also authorizes the Department of Education to direct state assistance to those school districts that develop and maintain successful remedial programs for students at risk of withdrawing from school before graduation.

Section 2. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION INFORMATION GATHERING

Requires the Department of Education to develop and implement a program to gather information from the districts about school students who withdraw from enrollment before high school graduation including the reasons for the students' withdraw. The department shall calculate and report its findings and may make recommendations to the State Board of Education and the Legislature for changes to the PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN AT RISK OF LEAVING SCHOOL. In addition the department is required to administer the the child at risk program.

Section 3. DISTRICTS TO REPORT DROPOUTS AND REASONS

Adds a new section requiring each school district to report to the commissioner the number of students who dropout before graduation and the reasons for their withdraw. The commissioner shall then annually report the dropout rate for each district and for the state for kindergarten through grade 12. These rates are to be expressed as a percentage for each respective grade.

Section 4. SCHOOL BOARD PLANS AND CRITERIA FOR CHILDREN AT RISK**ARTICLE 5A. PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN AT RISK OF LEAVING SCHOOL**

This new article will require each school board to annually identify and account for those children at risk who are or should be enrolled in the district.

THE CHILDREN AT RISK PLAN

A school board may develop a plan to meet the needs of their children at risk. These plans must describe what steps school board will take to keep its children at risk in school until graduation. A plan may include curriculum modifications and alternative programs that meet the minimum course of study for public schools as prescribed by the Department of Education. These modifications and alternatives may include:

- (1) individual tutoring, individual and group remediation or other instructional strategies, with sufficient support services, to permit a student to benefit educationally from the instruction;
- (2) model alternative educational programs, including programs combining academic learning with a substantial employment or experience component;
- (3) collaborative efforts with other state and local agencies directed at helping a student to overcome problems that interfere with learning;
- (4) expanded use of guidance and career planning services and;
- (5) expanded use of counseling services, including peer discussion groups and intervention efforts.

In addition, if a district has had 50 or more dropouts or a dropout rate greater than 5% the district's secondary enrollment (grades 7-12) the school board shall submit a plan to the commissioner of education.

Plans must also describe how remedial instruction, parental involvement, and community support services will be used to meet the needs of children at risk in the district.

CHILDREN AT RISK GRANT FUND

The department may make grants from the children at risk grant account in the general fund. Grants are to be made to eligible school districts for a children at risk education program established with a children at risk plan. An application for a child at risk grant must include:

- (1) a copy of the school board's children at risk plan;
- (2) a proposed budget detailing the expenditure of all grant funds; and
- (3) an evaluation of the anticipated results of the children at risk program.

Among those districts otherwise eligible to receive a grant under for children at risk programs, the department shall first award grants to those districts who are required to develop and submit a plan as a result of an excessively high dropout rate.

CRITERIA FOR STATE AID

Districts will be entitled to receive additional children at risk grants if the department determines that in the previous school year the board's program for children at risk met at least three of the following criteria:

- (1) a retention rate of at least 70% the pupils enrolled in the program;
- (2) an attendance rate of at least 70% the pupils enrolled in the program;
- (3) graduation of 70% the seniors enrolled in the program;
- (4) at least 70% the pupils enrolled in the program received academic credit; or
- (5) the program maintained an average of at least one month of improvement in reading and mathematics performance for each month of instruction.

In addition, the department may withhold approval of a grant application if the commissioner has determined that the school board's existing children at risk program:

- (1) has not reduced the dropout rate for the district; or
- (2) does not provide substantial improvement in basic skills.

DEFINITIONS

"child at risk" means a secondary school student enrolled in a public school that a school board determines, under regulations of the department, is a student who

- (1) has withdrawn from enrollment in the district before graduation and has returned to complete graduation requirements; or
- (2) may withdraw before graduation because of
 - (a) family or social difficulties, personal health, or pregnancy;
 - (b) poor attendance;
 - (c) low achievement, as evidenced by being one or more years behind the students age group or grade in the number of credits attained or in basic skill levels, including reading and mathematics;
 - (d) low academic test scores;
 - (e) retention at a certain grade level;
 - (f) diminished self esteem and motivation.

"dropout" means a person under 18 years of age who is not attending school or participating in a correspondence program, continues to reside in the district, does not attend a vocational, technical, or adult education program, and has not graduated from high school.

"secondary school" includes grades seven through 12.

Section 5. DEPARTMENT TO REPORT ON ELEMENTARY DROPOUTS

A report and recommendations concerning withdrawals from elementary school by students in kindergarten through sixth grade shall be prepared by the Department of Education for the Board of Education and the Legislature. The recommendations in the report will include criteria to identify and programs to assist elementary students who are at risk of withdrawing from school before graduation from high school.

Section 6. TRANSITION PERIOD

A transition period is provided to allow the Commissioner to begin the collection of data, as required in Section 2, by October 1, 1989.

Section 7. EFFECTIVE DATE

The effective date of the Act would be July 1, 1989.



NEA-ALASKA

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March 15, 1989

To: Senator Paul Fisher, Chair
Members, Senate HESS Committee

Re: SB 81; "An Act relating to educational programs for school children who are at risk of withdrawing from school before high school graduation; and providing for an effective date."

NEA-Alaska strongly supports and encourages your favorable and expeditious action on SB 81.

This legislation addresses a serious need in Alaska schools; a need that was exemplified by the Governor's Interim Commission on Children and Youth; and a need that teachers and administrators can attest to all around Alaska: The difficulty of serving students and meeting the complex needs of those who are likely to drop out of school before graduation.

The legislation would require more systematic and accurate record-keeping on withdrawals and reasons for withdrawing from school. This alone would be a tremendous improvement over the current situation where records have been sketchy on the drop-out rate statewide.

It is clear to those of us in Alaska's classrooms and schools that we need to do things differently to meet the needs of students who have serious academic, social, or family problems. In almost all instances we know additional counseling services are needed, a modification of the traditional high school program is necessary, and most importantly the student who is a potential drop-out needs a more than average amount of quality time and treatment from at least one adult within the school setting. These additional services are not free but they are cost effective. The earlier we can intervene and provide assistance to students the better the chances that they will become productive members of society rather than law offenders or burdens on society.

The sponsor substitute for SB 81 is designed to address the need while maintaining costs at a minimal level. Providing one or two million dollars in this grant account is clearly not enough to address the magnitude of the problem. But it is a step in the right direction and ostensibly will provide funding for programs that are well designed and most needed.

It is important that this funding be supplemental to full foundation funding. If it is not, the problem would be two-fold; On the one hand, at risk students stay in school because of varied and diverse activities, programs, and offerings. Therefore, as schools must cut back on scope of offerings and services, more at risk youth are likely to drop out. On the other hand, a more obvious problem is that absent full funding any categorical aid is likely to be used to fill the gaps left by the cuts rather than move the district forward in addressing needs of at risk youth-- which is clearly the intention of the bill.


NEA and NEA-Alaska have been instrumental in the development of programs addressing the needs of at risk youth. We have also been involved in partially funding such programs through our Operation Rescue effort.

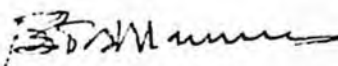
In Anchorage right now, a program written and promoted by the Anchorage Education Association is funded by federal, local and private sources. The guidelines and activities of the Anchorage Open Door Project are congruent with those outlined in Section 14.30.460 of this bill.

More projects of this nature, locally developed with broad based support, would be possible with the type of state funding provided in this bill.

We are grateful to the sponsors of S.B. 81 for filing this legislation and recognizing the problem and we are strongly supportive of its passage into law.

Respectfully submitted,


Judy Salo
President


Robert C. Manners
Executive Secretary

JS01/Sb81/dl

FISCAL NOTE

REQUEST:

Revision Date: _____
 Title: Educational Programs For School Children Who Are At Risk
 Sponsor: Duncan
 Requestor: Duncan

Agency Affected: Education
BRU Education Finance & Support Services,
Education Program Support
 Components: Basic Education,
Data Management

EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY 89	FY 90	FY 91	FY 92	FY 93	FY 94
PERSONAL SERVICES		117.6	117.6	117.6	117.6	117.6
TRAVEL		5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
CONTRACTUAL		20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0
SUPPLIES		2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
EQUIPMENT		11.2	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS						
TOTAL OPERATING	-0-	155.3	145.6	145.6	145.6	145.6
CAPITAL						
REVENUE						

FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND	-0-	155.8	145.6	145.6	145.6	145.6
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER						
TOTAL						

POSITIONS:

FULL-TIME		2	2	2	2	2
PART-TIME		1	1	1	1	1
TEMPORARY						

ANALYSIS : (Attach a separate page if necessary)

SB 221 contains a \$1,000.0 appropriation for the grant program outlined within SS SB81.

Prepared by: Mary Hakala Phone: 465-2800
 Division: Commissioner's Office Date: 3/21/89
 Approved by Commissioner: William G. Demmert Date: 3/21/89
 Agency: Education

- Distribution (by preparer):
- Legislative Finance
 - Legislative Sponsor
 - Requestor
 - Office of Management and Budget
 - Impact Agency(ies)

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

FISCAL NOTE ANALYSIS

Revised 3/21/89

SS SB 81: Education programs for school children who are at risk of withdrawing from school before graduation

Personal Services

1 FT Education Specialist, Office of Basic Education	\$61.5
1 FT Statistical Technician, Data Management Unit	41.1
1 PT Clerk Typist III	15.0
Subtotal	\$117.6

The Education Specialist in the Office of Basic Education will review and approve applications, provide technical assistance to school districts in program development and implementation, and monitor grantees for compliance once every three years. Data collection and reporting will be the function of the Statistical Technician in the Data Management Unit. The part time clerical position will provide necessary support functions including tracking of report requirements, correspondence, distribution of materials and information.

Travel

Technical assistance in program start-up including program development, accounting and record keeping systems; monitoring and evaluation functions. \$5.0

Contractual

Resource materials purchase and distribution costs, printing and distribution of reports, specialized computer programming needs for development of a student tracking system, specific inservice training opportunities for development of local programs and sharing of successes and approaches between school districts, audioconference meeting costs. \$20.0

Commodities

Supplies for staff positions. \$2.0

Equipment

1st year: Two computer work stations and equipment for positions \$11.2
2nd & subsequent years: Minor equipment needs identified as reporting and tracking systems become operational \$1.0

Grants

A separate appropriation bill (SB 221) contains \$1,000.0 in grant funds for the program outlined within this legislation.

Position Title Education Specialist II		No. of Positions 1	Range/Step 21B	Barg. Unit GGU
Time Status FT	Staff Months 12.0	Location Juneau		Election District 4
Justification				
Position will review and approve applications, provide technical assistance to school districts in program development and implementation, and monitor grantees for compliance with grant requirements. In addition, position will serve as central coordinator for program efforts in the state and assist districts in pooling information and distribute information for successful practices and programs to districts throughout the state.				
Type of Expenditure		Amount		
1	2	3		
Salary	47.4			
Benefits	14.1			
Premium Pay				
Other				
Total Personal Services		61.5		
Travel				
Contractual				
Commodities				
Equipment				
Other				
Total Cost				
Funding Source for Total Cost				
Federal Receipts	1002			
G. F. Match	1003			
General Fund	1004	61.5		
I-A Receipts	1006			
CIP Receipts	1061			
Other				

**Request For
New Position**

Agency Education
 BRU Educational Program Support
 Component Basic Education and
Instructional Improvement

Page 3 of 5
 Revised Date

FY 90

Position Title Clerk Typise III		No. of Positions 1	Range/Step 8B	Barg. Unit GGU	
Time Status PT	Staff Months 6.0	Location Juneau		Election District 4	
Type of Expenditure		Justification			
		<p>The half-time clerical position will provide all necessary staff support for the Education Specialist and field inquiries from the public on the At-Risk program. Specific responsibilities will include tracking of report requirements, correspondence, distribution of materials and information, and response to general inquiries.</p>			
Amount					
1	2				3
Salary	10.1				
Benefits	4.9				
Premium Pay					
Other					
Total Personal Services					15.0
Travel					
Contractual					
Commodities					
Equipment					
Other					
Total Cost					
Funding Source for Total Cost					
Federal Receipts 1002					
G. F. Match 1003					
General Fund 1004		15.0			
I-A Receipts 1006					
CIP Receipts 1061					
Other					

**Request For
New Position**

Agency Education
 BRU Educational Program Support
 Component Basic Education and
Instructional Improvement

Page 4 of 5
 Revised Date

FY 90

Position Title Statistical Technician II		No. of Positions 1	Range/Step i4B	Barg. Unit GGU
Time Status FT	Staff Months 12.0	Location Juneau		Election District 4
		Justification		
Type of Expenditure		Amount		
1	2	3		
Salary	29.2			
Benefits	11.9			
Premium Pay				
Other				
Total Personal Services		41.1		
Travel				
Contractual				
Commodities				
Equipment				
Other				
Total Cost				
Funding Source for Total Cost				
Federal Receipts	1002			
G. F. Match	1003			
General Fund	1004	41.1		
I-A Receipts	1006			
CIP Receipts	1061			
Other				

The primary function of the Statistical Technician is to collect, compile and report data as required by the At-Risk legislation, including data on early withdrawal of students before graduation, program data and calculation of entitlement based on student data submitted to the departments.

**Request For
New Position**

Agency Education
 BRU Data Management & Processing
 Component Data Management

Page 5 of 5
 Revised Date

FY 90

PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN AT RISK OF LEAVING SCHOOL

" An Act relating to educational programs for school children who are at risk of withdrawing from school before graduation; and providing for an effective date. "

Section 1.

FINDINGS AND PURPOSE

While students may legally withdraw high school at the age of 16 there are various reasons for students to dropout of high school before graduation. Among these are unsatisfactory educational experiences, discipline problems, truancy, and any number of family, health, and social problems.

As our society advances many of the advanced skills of yesterday are becoming standard requirements for employment in todays work force. In addition, most jobs will demand a level of basic skill that is seldom attained by students who have failed to finish high school. Opportunities in many jobs, the military, the post secondary educational system, and many industrial training programs are reduced or closed to those without a high school diploma. The lack of a high school diploma or its equivalent may consign students to a greater risk of unemployment or to a lifetime of low level jobs when their real ability is much higher.

This legislation requires the commissioner of education to collect and report information about the number of students withdrawing from school before graduation, and the reasons for their leaving. It also authorizes the Department of Education to direct state assistance to those school districts that develop and maintain successful remedial programs for students at risk of withdrawing from school before graduation.

Section 2. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION INFORMATION GATHERING

Requires the Department of Education to develop and implement a program to gather information from the districts about school students who withdraw from enrollment before high school graduation including the reasons for the students' withdraw. The department shall calculate and report its findings and may make recommendations to the State Board of Education and the Legislature for changes to the PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN AT RISK OF LEAVING SCHOOL. In addition the department is required to manage and implement a financial support program for children at risk.

Section 3. CHILDREN AT RISK INSTRUCTIONAL UNITS

Amends 14.17.031 Allowable Instructional Units, by adding a reference to indicate that the number of units for child at risk educational programs as determined by application of Section 4.

Section 4. VALUE OF CHILDREN AT RISK INSTRUCTIONAL UNITS

A child enrolled in a child at risk program generates 0.025 instructional units if the child receives child at risk services and the program is entitled to receive funding under 14.30.480.

Section 5. DISTRICTS TO REPORT DROPOUTS AND REASONS

Adds a new section requiring each school district to report to the commissioner the number of students who dropout before graduation and the reasons for their withdraw. The commissioner shall then annually report the dropout rate for each district and for the state for kindergarten through grade 12. These rates are to be expressed as a percentage for each respective grade.

Section 6. SCHOOL BOARD PLANS AND CRITERIA FOR CHILDREN AT RISK

ARTICLE 5A. PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN AT RISK OF LEAVING SCHOOL

This new article will require each school board to annually identify and account for those children at risk who are or should be enrolled in the district.

THE PLAN

A school board may develop a plan to meet the needs of their children at risk. These plans must describe what steps school board will take to keep its children at risk in school until graduation. A plan may include curriculum modifications and alternative programs that meet the minimum course of study for public schools as prescribed by the Department of Education. These modifications and alternatives may include:

- (1) individual tutoring, individual and group remediation or other instructional strategies;
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In addition, if a district has had 50 or more dropouts or a dropout rate greater than 5% of the district's secondary enrollment (grades 7-12) the school board shall submit a plan to the commissioner of education.

Plans must also describe how remedial instruction, parental involvement, and community support services will be used to meet the needs of children at risk in the district.

CRITERIA FOR STATE AID

Districts will be entitled to additional state aid if the commissioner determines that in the previous school year the district's program for children at risk meets at least three of the following criteria:

- (1) a retention rate of at least 70% of the pupils enrolled in the program;
- (2) an attendance rate of at least 70% of the pupils enrolled in the program;
- (3) graduation of 70% of the seniors enrolled in the program;
- (4) at least 70% of the pupils enrolled in the program received academic credit; or
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DEFINITIONS

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family or social difficulties, personal health, or pregnancy;

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"secondary school" includes grades seven through 12.

Section 7. DEPARTMENT REPORT ON ELEMENTARY DROPOUTS

A report and recommendations concerning withdrawals from school by elementary students in kindergarten through sixth grade shall be prepared by the Department of Education for the Board of Education and the Legislature. The recommendations in the report will include criteria to identify and programs to assist elementary students who are at risk of withdrawing from school before graduation from high school.

Section 8. TRANSITION PERIOD

A transition period is provided to allow the Commissioner to begin the collection of data, as required in Section 2, by October 1, 1989. And the districts applications for the 1989 school year will not be required to meet the successful program criteria from 14.30.480 (a) in Section 4.

Section 9. EFFECTIVE DATE

The effective date of the Act would be July 1, 1989.



NEA-ALASKA

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March 15, 1989

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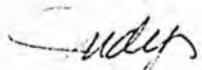
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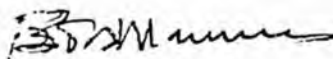
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President


Robert C. Manners
Executive Secretary

JS01/Sb81/dl