

**HB**

**27**

# FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA  
1999 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL NO. HB 27

Revision Date (Note if correction) \_\_\_\_\_  
Title "An Act relating to graduate student loans, and providing for an effective date"

Dept. Affected Education  
BRU ACPE

Sponsor Rep. Mulder  
Requester HHESS

Component Student Loan Operations

Component Serial No 213

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousand Of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below

OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY2000	FY2001	FY2002	FY2003	FY2004	FY2005
Personal services						
Travel						
Contractual						
Supplies						
Equipment						
Land & Structures						
Grants, Claims						
Miscellaneous						
<b>TOTAL OPERATING</b>	<b>.</b>	<b>.</b>	<b>.</b>	<b>.</b>	<b>.</b>	<b>.</b>

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES						
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CHANGE IN REVENUE ( )						
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FUND SOURCE (Thousand of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts						
1003 GF Match						
1004 GF						
1005 GF/Program Receipts						
1037 GF/Mental Health						
Other (Specify Type) 1106 P-Sec Rec						
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>.</b>	<b>.</b>	<b>.</b>	<b>.</b>	<b>.</b>	<b>.</b>

Estimate of any current year (FY 99) cost: \_\_\_\_\_

**POSITIONS**

Full-Time						
Part-Time						
Temporary						

**ANALYSIS:** (Attach a separate page if necessary)

It should be noted that inclusion of forgiveness benefits would require a general fund appropriation. The information provided in this fiscal analysis is predicated upon statements that no forgiveness benefits are intended in HB 27, and that the assistance provided to Professional Student Exchange Program participants in the form of support fees are to be incurred under terms and conditions of loans. \*Program funds disbursed as student loans are not subject to the Executive Budget Act, therefore an appropriation is not required.

Prepared by Mike Maher, Director of Student Loan Operations  
Division Student Loan Operations

Phone 465-6743  
Date/Time 2/1/99 11:59 AM

Approved by Exec. Director Diane Barrans  
Agency Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education

Date 2/1/99

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**ANALYSIS: (continued)**

Yearly support fees projected for the '99-'2000 school year range from a low of \$4.2 for the Physician Assistant field to a high of \$22.8 for Medicine. The cost to the loan fund of Alaska's participation in the program again will vary significantly depending on the number of applicants awarded loans, and the professional fields approved.

In order to determine a reasonable level of participation, the WICHE Administrative Office was asked to review Alaska's historical participation level in the Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP) as well as state professional workforce projections and provide recommendations regarding the professional fields and number of students. Their analysis is as follows:

	No. of students
Dentistry	3
Physical Therapy	6
Occupational Therapy	4
Optometry	2
Podiatry	1
Physician Assistant	3
Total	<u>19</u>

The cost of this level of participation would be \$157,300 in the first year and rise to \$530,628 when all fields are fully enrolled.

# SENATE COMMITTEE REPORT

DATE: 2/25/99

FURTHER: Finance

DATE TURNED  
IN TO OFFICE: 3/29/99

HESS Committee considered

CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 27(HES)

GRADUATE STUDENT LOANS

and recommends:

be replaced with \_\_\_\_\_ CS \_\_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_\_)

adopt previous \_\_\_\_\_ CS \_\_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_\_)

attached amendment(s)

adopt Letter of Intent by \_\_\_\_\_ Committee

further referral to the \_\_\_\_\_ Committee

**Senate Bill:**

same title

new title

**House Bill:**

same title

technical title

new: SCR# \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNING <u>DO</u> PASS	DP	OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS	NR	DNP	AM
		<i>Spring Hill</i>	✓		
		<i>Clearance</i>	✓		
		<i>R. L. 925</i>	✓		
<i>Peter Kelly</i>	✓				
CHAIR:		CHAIR: <i>Mike Miller</i>	✓		

**NEW FISCAL NOTE(S):**

Department                      Date      Zero      Fiscal

Department	Date	Zero	Fiscal

**PREVIOUS FISCAL NOTE(S):\***

Department                      Date      Zero      Fiscal

Department	Date	Zero	Fiscal
<i>Ed</i>	<i>2/1/99</i>	✓	<i> </i>

APPROPRIATION -- no fiscal note

\*include fiscal notes accompanying Governor's bill

# FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA  
1999 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL NO. HB 27

Revision Date (Note if correction) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Title "An Act relating to graduate student loans, and providing for an effective date"  
 Sponsor Rep. Mulder  
 Requester HHESS

Dept. Affected Education  
 BRU ACPE  
 Component Student Loan Operations  
 Component Serial No. 213

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Supplies						
Equipment						
Land & Structures						
Grants, Claims						
Miscellaneous						
<b>TOTAL OPERATING</b>						

<b>CAPITAL EXPENDITURES</b>						
-----------------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--

<b>CHANGE IN REVENUE ( )</b>						
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Other (Specify Type) 1106 P-Sec Rec						
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Estimate of any current year (FY 99) cost: \_\_\_\_\_

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Part-Time						
Temporary						

**ANALYSIS.** (Attach a separate page if necessary)

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Prepared by Mike Maher, Director of Student Loan Operations  
 Division Student Loan Operations  
 Approved by Exec. Director Diane Barrans  
 Agency Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education

Phone 465-6743  
 Date/Time 2/1/99 11:59 AM  
 Date 2/1/99

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**ANALYSIS:** (continued)

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# FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA  
1999 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL NO. CSHB 27 (HES)

Revision Date 2/8/99  
Title "An Act relating to graduate student loans; and providing for an effective date."  
Sponsor Rep. Mulder  
Requester (H) FIN

Dept. Affected Education  
BRU ACPE  
Component Student Loan Operations  
Component Serial No. 213

**Expenditures/Revenues**

(Thousand Of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

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Travel						
Contractual						
Supplies						
Equipment						
Land & Structures						
Grants, Claims						
Miscellaneous						
<b>TOTAL OPERATING</b>	*	*	*	*	*	*

<b>CAPITAL EXPENDITURES</b>						
-----------------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--

<b>CHANGE IN REVENUE ( )</b>						
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**FUND SOURCE**

(Thousand of Dollars)

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Prepared by Mike Maher, Director of Student Loan Operations  
Division Student Loan Operations

Phone 465-6743  
Date/Time 2/8/99 10:42 AM

Approved by Exec. Director, Diane Barrans  
Agency Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education

Date 2/8/99

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## FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA  
1998 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL NO. IIB 27

**ANALYSIS: (continued)**

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**REPRESENTATIVE ELDON MULDER**  
DISTRICT 23 MULDOON-Ft. RICHARDSON



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

## Sponsor Statement

### House Bill 27

### Graduate Student Loans and the WICHE Program

House Bill 27 amends statute to allow state student loan monies to be loaned through the Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education (WICHE) and repaid to the State of Alaska.

While our current budget situation does not allow Alaska to return to making grants, as we did prior to 1997. The state can make this change allowing for loans and provide a significant benefit to students. Alaska needs WICHE to take advantage of the reduced tuition (limited to 1.5 times the resident rate compared with up to 5 times the resident rate) and class spots which are restricted without our participation in WICHE.

The State of Alaska for more than 40 years has used student exchange programs of the WICHE to augment professional and other post secondary education. The State of Alaska's participation in WICHE's Professional Student Exchange Program began quickly after ratification of the Western Interstate Education compact in 1953. Alaska participated until monetary pressure forced suspension of Alaska's participation in the program in 1997.

Since the inception of the program 1,136 students participated in all professional fields with almost half returning to the state to live and practice their chosen profession

*Grants*

This bill would meet several ongoing needs such as provide for a long-term professional workforce, especially in health professions while easing access to affordable professional education for Alaskans. This is noteworthy as particular growth is expected in the elderly population.

This bill would also avoid large expenditures to build and operate professional schools in challenged financial times.

Definite reasons indicate participation is cost effective and viable strategy for the State.

1. State occupational projections indicate expected growth in numerous professional fields, resulting in the need for reliable replacement professionals.
2. Alaska residents continue to find it difficult to gain access to professional schools in most fields included in the Professional Student Exchange Program.
3. Demand for professional education remains in demand by Alaska residents
4. WICHE affords a cost-effective alternative to the creation of new schools and new programs in Alaska.

This bill will allow Alaska to renew our participation in the WICHE Professional Student Exchange program.



**REPRESENTATIVE ELDON MULDER**  
DISTRICT 23 MULDOON-Ft. RICHARDSON



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Sectional Summary of HB 27

TO: file

FROM: David S. Pree, Legislative Aide to Representative Mulder

DATE: 2/19/99

- 
- Section 1. Changes language to add the word "degree".
- Section 2. Moves WAMI Program repayment to place it with other related repayment language at the request of Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education. No substantive changes are made in Section 1 or Section 2.
- Section 3. Regulatory language allowing Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education to adopt regulations to implement A.S. 14.44.010 – A.S.14.44.040.
- Section 4. Allows for the repayment of Alaska State Student Loan monies distributed through Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education (WHICHE) graduate program to be repaid to the State of Alaska by the recipient student
- Section 5. Applicability under A.S. 14.44.040
- Section 6. Transition Regulations necessary to implement the Act on the effective date.
- Section 7. Allows Section 6 to take effect immediately.
- Section 8. Effective Date July 1, 1999. except as noted in Section 7.

# STATE OF ALASKA

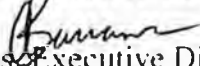
TONY KNOWLES, GOVERNOR

## ALASKA COMMISSION ON POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

3030 VINTAGE BLVD.  
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801-7139  
VOICE (800) 441-2962  
In Juneau 465-6740  
TDD (907) 465-3143  
FAX (907) 465-3293

### MEMORANDUM

TO: David Pree, Legislative Aide  
Office of Representative Eldon Mulder

FROM: Diane Barrans,  Executive Director  
Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education

DATE: February 8, 1999

SUBJECT: Alaska Participation in PSEP (CSHB 27 (HES))

This information is provided in follow up to our conversation of last week regarding the educational resource sharing under the Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education (WICHE) Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP). Attached are excerpts from the PSEP administrative manual that describe the structure of the program.

CSHB 27 (HES) proposes a state PSEP participation model that is not currently in use in any other participating state: that is, PSEP support in the form of a loan with no option for debt reduction through a service component. Due to the current budgetary context in which state programs must be scrutinized and funded, Representative Mulder's objective through the bill is to increase access without being dependent upon the state general fund. By authorizing the repayment requirement for full participant support costs, Alaska Student Loan Corporation funds may be used to fund that participation under terms and conditions yet to be set out by the Commission in regulation.

Staff recommendation to the Commission would be to make corporation funding available based on criteria that includes: 1) Alaska workforce needs; 2) student access to specific fields of study; and 3) limiting the financial risk to the loan fund.

Beginning on page IV-2 of the attachment the manual discusses the issue of student access in item 8. Category B fields are generally available to non-residents students in the western region. States elect to participate simply to provide their residents with a financial subsidy for tuition. As a result a PSEP loan in these fields would not provide participants any benefit. Therefore, it is unlikely that the Commission would target these fields for limited support dollars. Because of the generally wide access available to students in these fields, Alaska has not participated in Category B fields since 1986.

Please let me know if there is additional information that I may provide.

ATTACHMENTS

## **I. Overview of the Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP)**

**T**he Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP) makes it possible for states to assure that their students have access to professional education at reasonable tuition rates, but without the expense of establishing programs in their own institutions. The states comprising the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) provide this service under the terms of the Western Regional Education Compact, an interstate agreement established in 1953 and approved by the Congress of the United States. In addition to the original fields of medicine, dentistry, and veterinary medicine, the program includes physical therapy, occupational therapy, optometry, podiatry, law, graduate library studies, graduate nursing, pharmacy, public health, architecture, osteopathic medicine, and physician assistant.

Benefits accrue to all parties in the exchange. Students generally receive preferential consideration of their applications and tuition payments are substantially reduced. Receiving schools—which include virtually all the accredited programs in the fifteen fields in the region—gain access to a pool of highly qualified students, achieve more stability from enrollment fluctuations, and can bring class sizes to levels where quality can be strengthened and efficiencies improved. Sending states fulfill their obligations for meeting the educational needs of their citizens without having to build and maintain expensive professional programs at home. The regional skilled-manpower pool is significantly enhanced by the presence of professionals from all western states. The advantages of the program have been repeatedly acknowledged and affirmed by students, educators, legislators, governors, the WICHE Commissioners, state higher education planning officers, and practicing professionals.

Beginning in Fall 1987, PSEP fields were divided into two categories with different support fee policies. **Category A** includes fields in which programs are usually unavailable to nonresident students except in very small numbers. In **Category A**, support fees are established with some reference to the cost of education of the program to encourage receiving programs to reserve places for WICHE students. In **Category B**, programs are generally available to students for admission as regular nonresident students, so PSEP allows sending states the advantage of providing students with substantial savings in tuition over other nonresident students.

Effective operation of the Professional Student Exchange Program depends upon collaboration among states, institutions, and students, all assisted through WICHE coordination. The manual contains the policies established by the WICHE Commission and describes the roles and responsibilities of the primary parties. Close cooperation is essential both to achieve the program's benefits for the students and the accountability that is required in the expenditure of public funds.

## II. Basic Structure of PSEP

1. **Designation of Fields Available in PSEP.** Fields are included in PSEP by action of the WICHE Commission. When two or more states request the addition of a new field, a feasibility study is conducted by staff that identifies accredited programs within the region and determines the interest within other WICHE states in sending students in the field.

Except in nursing, PSEP includes only programs leading to the first professional degree (baccalaureate, master's or doctoral).

Each state determines which fields among those in the program it will make available to its residents. Ultimately, this is a legislative decision dependent upon the appropriation of state funds to pay support fees for a given number of students in the fields supported by that state. All WICHE states except Alaska, California, and South Dakota support students in at least one PSEP field. Since 1994 Alaska has not supported new students; California only receives students and South Dakota does not participate.

2. **How students qualify and are selected.** Students seeking participation in PSEP must meet requirements for (a) certification by their home state and (b) admission to the participating PSEP institution of their choice.
  - a) **State certification.** Each state establishes its own requirements for certification through an application process (see Section V, Page 6, "State Requirements for Certification") and designates a state certifying officer. Students apply to the certifying officer for certification that they are eligible for consideration in the program. Certification is not a guarantee of support. Only as many certified students as are authorized and funded through appropriations in each state can actually be supported as WICHE PSEP students.
  - b) **Admission to professional programs.** The student applies for admission to any participating institution of his/her choice through regular channels. The decision on admission is entirely at the discretion of the institution. In some cases, the institution may make admission contingent upon the applicant's achieving certification by his/her home state or by assurance of support as a PSEP student.

The WICHE Boulder office serves as the channel of communication between state certifying officers and participating professional schools and programs in determining which admitted students will be supported.

3. **Financial provisions.** Institutions enrolling PSEP students receive: (a) tuition paid by the student, and (b) a support fee paid to the institution through WICHE by the student's home state.
  - a) **Tuition paid by student.** In Category A fields, the student attending any public institution pays tuition at no more than the *resident student rate*. In Category B fields, the student in a public institution also pays resident tuition except in those cases where tuition plus the support fee paid by the sending state is less than the institution's full nonresident tuition. In these cases, the institution may charge the student the remaining difference (see Section IV, Page 3, #11, "Support Fees"). In both categories, students attending a private institution pay substantially less than that institution's regular tuition. Historically, WICHE students enrolled in private institutions paid approximately one-third standard tuition. However, because tuition is increasing at a rate greater than the support fee, in recent years students have had to pay a greater amount than that one-third. Today, virtually all private programs credit the PSEP student with the support fee.

## IV. Policies and Procedures

1. **Communications.** One advantage of the WICHE Professional Student Exchange Program is that it enables students from the sending states to attend a wide range of institutions throughout the West, where quite different approaches to professional education in the PSEP fields may be taken at the student's option. While advantageous, this freedom and flexibility complicates the administration of the program. Effective operation of the program is entirely dependent upon the collaboration of persons in the sending states, in the participating institutions, at WICHE, and the students themselves.

Because of variations among programs, the circumstances of individual students, the difficulty of keeping several hundred persons informed about changing state funding patterns, and other reasons, experience has shown that the program works best when certifying officers and receiving program officers communicate **only through the WICHE office**. Except in rare expressly approved cases, certifying officers and program officials should not communicate directly. By handling these communications, the WICHE office can assure that those who "need to know" are in fact informed and can be held accountable.

It is likely that several offices at participating institutions have responsibilities that affect the WICHE student and program. The designated institution contact person(s) will need to keep appropriate people within the institution informed and assure that transactions affecting WICHE students are reported. For example:

- a) Admission actions on WICHE students need to be reported promptly to WICHE.
  - b) Student tuition bills need to reflect WICHE student status.
  - c) WICHE needs to be informed about students who receive federal scholarships such as National Health Service Corps (see Section IV, Page 2, #5) and about WICHE students who withdraw or otherwise change status.
2. **Accreditation status of WICHE programs.** Only programs with full accreditation of the appropriate professional accrediting association may participate in PSEP. If a participating program experiences a change of status affecting its accreditation, the program must report the change to WICHE. If the new status involves a loss of the rights and privileges accorded to graduates of fully accredited programs, the participation of new students will be suspended pending restoration of full accreditation.
  3. **Preference for WICHE students.** All receiving schools/programs in Group A fields (See Section IV, Page 2, #8) are expected to give preference to WICHE-certified applicants. Some public institutions do this by considering WICHE applicants immediately after considering residents and prior to admitting any other nonresidents; some schools consider all applicants within the pool on the same basis and extend preference to a WICHE applicant when two are equally qualified; some reserve a specific number or percentage of places for WICHE students; some are prohibited by state policy from admitting nonresident students unless they are WICHE-supported students. The method by which preference is given should be discussed with WICHE but is determined by the school.
  4. **Continuation of support pending student completion.** After a student is certified and supported, the state assumes the obligation to continue support for that student through the normal duration of the program, subject to appropriation of necessary funds and provided the student remains in good standing. Except as provided to the contrary by formal legal interpretation of constitutional or statutory provisions, or published policy in the sending state, this obligation continues even if the student changes legal residence to another state. Once a student receives any state support through WICHE, that student will be monitored for academic progress until all degree requirements have been met.

9. **Tuition charges to WICHE students.** In state-support institutions, in **Category A** fields the student will be charged not more than the resident student rate. In **Category B** fields, except as provided below, the student will pay resident tuition and the institution may also charge the student any difference that remains between (1) the sum of resident tuition and the support fee which is paid through WICHE by the student's home state, and (2) the institution's nonresident tuition charge. (This policy was reaffirmed by the Commission in December 1992.)

Students who have been authorized for support should not be charged late fees by the enrolling institution for the support fee. Payment of all support fees are made on January 15 of each year.

In private institutions in **Category A** or **B**, the student will be charged one-third the standard rate of tuition, or less at the discretion of the school. If the sum of the WICHE support fee plus one-third of the standard tuition paid by student is less than the standard tuition charge, the institution may charge the difference to the student.

10. **Refunds.** When a WICHE student withdraws from an institution or incurs other such changes of status, the amount of refund of tuition or other charges is determined according to the institution's refund policy for all students. See "Student withdrawals; repeat years; leaves of absence," Section IV, Page 2, #6 and "Support fees," below.

#### 11. Support fees

- a) **Establishment and payment of support fees.** In June of each even-numbered year the WICHE Commission adopts a schedule of support fee rates for each of the years of the biennium that begins approximately one year later. In past years, the fee was sometimes based on a weighted average cost, calculated on the basis of cost reports submitted by the receiving institutions. Commission policy, adopted in 1980 and modified in 1986 when the existing fields were placed in **Category A** or **Category B**, provides that fees in **Category A** fields are to be based on "a negotiated or fee-for-service, rather than exclusively a cost-of-education approach..."

In **Category B** fields the support fee was originally related to the average difference between resident and nonresident tuition charges in the participating institutions. The fees in these fields, added to the resident tuition paid by the student, approximate the average nonresident charge among receiving institutions in the field concerned. The Commission's original intention, with respect to **Category B** fields, was that the student would pay resident tuition or a relatively small additional amount, while the state will pay a reduced support fee that, together with what the student pays, will cover the institution's regular nonresident tuition charge. In recent years, however, the nonresident portion of the tuition in **Category B** fields has increased faster than anticipated, and faster than the rate of support fees. Consequently in **Category B** fields, the student pays the balance between the support fee paid by the state and the full nonresident tuition, but not less than resident tuition.

Support fees in each field are the same regardless of the home state of the student, the institution in which the student is enrolled, or class level. The support fee is for the full (regular) academic period; if a student withdraws or delays enrollment, only the fee applicable for the period attended is payable and any excess already collected must be refunded.

- b) **Adjusting payment to varying program arrangements.** For programs that depart from a traditional academic program or calendar (e.g., 15 continuous months; three calendar rather than four academic years; etc.) WICHE will adapt the payments guided by the principle that the fees paid for a student generally may not exceed the total that would be paid for a student in a traditional program. Normally the payment will be based on the relationship between the months of attendance within a fiscal year and the nine months of an academic year. The amount to be paid in each case is cited annually in the support agreement which is submitted to the certifying officer and receiving program for review and concurrence. (See Section VI; Page 6, "Support Agreement".)
- c) **Support fees in physical therapy.** Varying approaches among programs in regard to clinical components in physical and occupational therapy led the Commission to different policies of

APPENDIX 1

APPROVED SUPPORT FEES FOR THE 1999-2000 AND 2000-2001 BIENNIUM

The WICHE Commission set the support fees as shown below at its semi-annual meeting, June 18-19, 1998. Fees are stated as they apply to the **nine-month school term**. Adjustments to accommodate 12-month programs or other special circumstances are spelled out in the Professional Student Exchange Program Manual.

	1998-1999*	1999-2000	2000-2001
<u>Group A</u>			
MEDICINE	\$22,800	\$22,800	\$22,800
DENTISTRY	14,300	14,300	14,700
VETERINARY MEDICINE	19,900	20,400	20,900
PHYSICAL THERAPY	6,100	7,200	7,400
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY	7,400	7,600	7,800
OPTOMETRY	9,100	9,300	9,500
PODIATRY	9,400	9,600	9,800
OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE	13,400	13,700	14,000
PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT	4,100	4,200	4,300
<u>Group B</u>			
GRADUATE LIBRARY STUDIES	\$4,400	\$4,500	\$4,600
LAW	4,900	5,000	5,100
PHARMACY	4,900	5,000	5,100
GRADUATE NURSING	4,400	4,500	4,600
PUBLIC HEALTH	5,200	5,300	5,400
ARCHITECTURE	3,400	3,500	3,600

The payment of required student "tuition," and the credit of support fees, is different in "Group A" and "Group B" fields. Please refer to Section IV, Page 3, #9, "Tuition charges to WICHE students" for specific guidelines and requirements.

\*for reference; approved June 1996.

# WICHE IN THE WEST: 1998 OVERVIEW

WESTERN INTERSTATE COMMISSION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

The WESTERN INTERSTATE COMMISSION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION was created to facilitate resource sharing and cost-effective services for and among Western states and their public and private colleges and universities.

The 15 member states — Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming — share higher education programs, expertise, facilities, and data. Equally apportioned state dues provide WICHE's basic support; many projects are funded substantially by foundations and the federal government. WICHE Commissioners are appointed by the governors of their member states.

## STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAMS

Flexible, state-responsive programs provide a broad range of higher education options for more than 9,000 students each year at undergraduate, graduate, and professional levels. Through these programs:

- Students gain affordable access to desired programs;
- States avoid unnecessary duplication of programs;
- Institutions can devote their resources to improving the quality of their educational offerings.

**Western Undergraduate Exchange.** Students pay 150 percent of the receiving school's resident tuition, substantially less than the standard nonresident tuition. More than 8,200 students were enrolled in 1997-98 across 13 states.

**Professional Student Exchange.** Nearly 900 students take advantage of 15 fields of professional education. More than 10,600 professionals, most in health care, have received home state support when enrolled in programs in another Western state. Some 93 percent of these professionals remain within the region to practice their careers.

**Western Regional Graduate Program.** Distinctive graduate programs are available on an in-state tuition basis

Available are 111 graduate programs at 35 institutions in 14 states. More than 200 students participate.

## POLICY AND INFORMATION

WICHE's policy research and information activities emphasize options that states and institutions might apply to higher education issues and concerns. The information is disseminated through publications, the Internet, and through individual and multistate discussion forums. Examples include

- Publication of a fact book to inform policy makers of trends that impact higher education and provide multiyear and interstate comparisons as a context for policy considerations.
- State-by-state projections of the number of high school graduates, including the only source of these projections by race and ethnicity and by both public and private schools.
- Annual compilation of tuition and mandatory student fees at all public colleges and universities in the West.
- Studies of college student migration patterns and an examination of state needs for health care professionals.
- Conferences on higher education policy issues for government leaders, campus and system administrators, faculty, students and trustees.

## EDUCATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS

WICHE's Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications is a national leader in helping states and institutions to use new technologies more effectively for improved education. The nearly 200 dues-paying members in 37 states and six countries cooperate in sharing information, identifying barriers to the use of telecommunications in education, evaluating technological approaches to education, and facilitating multistate approaches to technology-based learning. Priority projects are:

- *The Distance Learner's Guide*, a just-published primer for distance learners.
- Developing standard accounting principles to assess higher education's use of technology, and other tools and training for evaluating the effectiveness of technology in education.
- Assisting institutions with policies and programs that furnish support for distance learning students.
- Providing training for managers of distance education programs on campuses and in higher education systems.
- Monitoring national legislative and regulatory issues in telecommunications for education and policies related to distance learning.
- Developing a series of "Principles of Good Practice" for assessing and accrediting electronically offered academic programs.

## NORTH AMERICAN COLLABORATION

Since 1993, WICHE has worked with regional and international partners to increase understanding and opportunities for collaboration among higher education institutions and educational leaders in the Western U.S.

and Mexico. The project now is developing a North American focus and includes Canada. Central project strategies are:

- Convening higher education leaders from the countries to encourage new collaborations.
- Expanding dialogue and access to information resources by utilizing the Internet as a mechanism for dialogue and a dissemination vehicle for current research related to higher education in North America.

A comparative research series published by WICHE analyzes major policy issues and differences in Canadian, Mexican, and U.S. higher education.

## FACULTY DIVERSITY

WICHE is a major partner in a national effort to develop more college faculty from among minority groups. WICHE's Doctoral Scholars Program has provided support for 50 minority doctoral students in 12 states.

## MENTAL HEALTH

The WICHE Mental Health Program seeks to improve the quality of training and research in mental health by working with educators and mental health practitioners and administrators. The overall aim of these activities is to expand public mental health resources, develop an educated and trained workforce, and provide research and information services.

# THE COMMISSION

## ALASKA

**Diane M. Barrans**, executive director, Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education, Juneau;

**Johnny Ellis**, state senator, Anchorage

## ARIZONA

**Frank Besnette** (WICHE vice chair, 1998), executive director, Arizona Board of Regents, Phoenix;

**Rick Lavis**, executive vice president, Arizona Cotton Growers, Phoenix;

**Daniel Schottel**, state representative, Tucson

## CALIFORNIA

**Phillip G. Bardos**, former member of the Los Angeles City Board of Education and the California Community Colleges Board of Governors, Channel Islands;

**Judith Chambers**, vice president of student life, University of the Pacific, Stockton;

**Charles Lindahl**, associate vice chancellor for academic affairs, California State University System.

## COLORADO

**Audrey Alvarado** (WICHE chair, 1995), associate dean for student and external affairs, GESPA Graduate School of Public Affairs, University of Colorado, Denver;

**Joe D. May**, president, Pueblo Community College;

**Dwayne C. Nuzum**, executive director, Colorado Commission on Higher Education, Denver.

## HAWAII

**Doris Ching**, vice president for student affairs, University of Hawaii at Manoa, Honolulu;

**Gerald L. De Mello**, director of university relations, University of Hawaii at Hilo;

**Raymond S. Ono**, senior vice president, University Banking Center, First Hawaiian Bank, Honolulu.

## IDAHO

**Gregory G. Fitch**, executive director for higher education, State Board of Education, Boise;

**Jack Riggs**, state senator and physician, Coeur d'Alene;

**Charles Ruch**, president, Boise State University

## MONTANA

**Richard Crofts**, commissioner, Montana University System, Helena;

**Francis J. Kerias**, former president of Carroll College, Helena;

**Emily Swanson**, state representative, Bozeman.

## NEVADA

**Richard S. Jarvis**, chancellor, University and Community College System of Nevada, Reno;

**Paul Page** (WICHE chair, 1996), vice president for university advancement, University of Nevada, Reno;

**Raymond D. Rawson**, state senator, Las Vegas

## NEW MEXICO

**Everett Frost**, president, Eastern New Mexico University, Portales

**Pauline Gubbels**, state representative, Albuquerque;

**Bruce D. Hamlett**, executive director, Commission on Higher Education, Santa Fe

## NORTH DAKOTA

**Roy Hausauer**, state representative, Wahpeton;

**Larry Isaak**, chancellor, North Dakota University System, Bismarck.

**Joe Peltier**, vice president, North Dakota Board of Higher Education, Arthur

## OREGON

**Diane Vinos** (WICHE chair, 1997), vice chancellor for corporate and public affairs and board secretary, Oregon University System.

**Roger J. Bassett**, commissioner, Oregon Community Colleges and Job Training Partnership Act Administration, Salem.

**George E. Richardson, Jr.**, manager of federal and local government relations and community affairs, Northwest Natural Gas Company, Portland

## SOUTH DAKOTA

**Robert Burns**, distinguished professor and acting director, W.O. Farber Center for Civic Leadership, University of South Dakota, on leave from the Political Science Department, South Dakota State University, Brookings;

**David R. Gienapp**, lawyer and president, South Dakota Board of Regents, Madison;

**Robert T. (Tod) Perry**, executive director, South Dakota Board of Regents, Pierre.

## UTAH

**Cecelia H. Foxley**, commissioner of higher education, Utah System of Higher Education, Salt Lake City;

**Lyle Hillyord** (WICHE chair, 1998) state senator, Logan;

**Dale O. Zabriskie**, president, Zabriskie & Associates, and member, State Board of Regents, Salt Lake City

## WASHINGTON

**Don Carlson**, state representative, Vancouver;

**Marcus S. Gaspard**, executive director, Washington State Higher Education Coordinating Board, Olympia;

**Ken Jacobsen**, state senator, Seattle.

## WYOMING

**Philip L. Dubois**, president, University of Wyoming, Laramie.

**Rae Lynn Job**, state senator and director of special projects, Sweetwater School District #1, Rock Springs;

**Charles J. Yates**, manager of surface operations, Solvay Minerals, Green River

# ALASKA AND WICHE

WESTERN INTERSTATE COMMISSION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Alaska's membership in WICHE, an innovative regional compact among 15 Western states, enables it to reduce costs, better serve students, and enhance its higher education system. Key benefits include:

- ❑ WICHE expands the range of educational programs and institutions available to Alaska students, while helping Alaska avoid having to develop new programs in several disciplines. Through WICHE, several thousand Alaska students have trained outside the state in professional, undergraduate, and graduate programs at reduced tuition rates; Alaska has welcomed hundreds of nonresident students to its programs.
- ❑ Expanding the use of new technologies in delivering educational services is essential in today's competitive educational environment. Through WICHE, four Alaska institutions and organizations participate in an international telecommunications cooperative to improve their distance learning programs.
- ❑ Complex problems confront higher education policy makers in the West. Those policy makers are receiving useful comparative data and information from WICHE to help put various state issues into regional and national contexts and to share effective strategies.
- ❑ As the West's population becomes increasingly diverse, a shortage of minority faculty members continues to affect Western institutions. Through WICHE's Doctoral Scholars program, Alaska minority students receive support to earn their doctorates and become faculty members.
- ❑ Preparing students to function in a global marketplace requires increasing collaboration among public and private sector leaders. Alaska's institutions, through WICHE, have access to a growing North American network of education and business leaders who are developing collaborative initiatives among Canada, the U.S., and Mexico.
- ❑ Regional collaboration and resource sharing facilitated by WICHE also benefit Alaska's mental health system.

Representing Alaska on the 45-member Commission are: Diane M. Barrans, executive director, Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education, Juneau; and Johnny Ellis, state senator, Anchorage. WICHE Commissioners are appointed by the governors of their member states. Sen. Ellis also serves on WICHE's Legislative Advisory Committee, along with State Representative Gene Therriault.

The 15 member states — Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming — share higher education programs, expertise, facilities and data. Equally apportioned state dues provide WICHE's basic support; many projects are funded substantially by foundations and the federal government.

## STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAMS

Exchanges allow Alaska students to tap professional, undergraduate, and graduate programs outside the state at a cost comparable to what they would pay at home. In this way, they have affordable access to higher education, and Alaska avoids costly and unnecessary duplication of programs and facilities.

Through the Professional Student Exchange Program, 15 fields of professional career education, most in the health professions, are available. More than 10,600 professionals have received home state support when enrolled in participating programs in another WICHE state. Nearly 93 percent of these professionals have remained in the region. Some 1,139 of these professionals were from Alaska.

Through the Western Undergraduate Exchange, students may attend programs outside their home state. They pay 150 percent of the receiving school's resident tuition, much less than the standard nonresident tuition. A record of nearly 8,300 students enrolled in 1997-98 under this exchange, which involves more than 100 campuses in 13 WICHE states. Some 894 students from Alaska enrolled in other states at no cost to the state. Another 81 students from other participating states enrolled in Alaska.

Through the Western Regional Graduate Program, distinctive, high quality graduate programs are

open to students in 14 states at a resident-tuition rate. Some 111 participating master's and doctoral programs are available at 35 institutions. In 1997, 13 graduate students from Alaska enrolled in programs outside the state while other graduate students were eligible to enroll in Alaska's programs.

## EDUCATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS

WICHE's Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications is a leader in helping states and institutions to more effectively develop and use their educational technologies. The Cooperative serves nearly 200 dues-paying members in 37 U.S. states and six countries. Four Alaska institutions or organizations are members of the Western Cooperative: Ilisagvik College, Barrow; the University of Alaska Fairbanks; the University of Alaska Southeast; and the University of Alaska System Office. April Crosby, dean of instruction at Ilisagvik College is the chair of the Western Cooperative's Steering Committee.

Alaska had 19 participants at recent Cooperative conferences and institutes on key distance education issues. Training is also provided for managers of distance education programs on campuses and in higher education systems. The Cooperative helped design and implement the "electronic" Western Governors University that will offer competency-based educational programs. It is also developing tools and providing training for evaluating the effectiveness of technology in education. A recent project surveyed more than 1,000 higher education institutions to identify exemplary student support services in distance learning. Members also benefit from the Cooperative's monitoring of national legislative and regulatory issues related to distance learning.

## POLICY & INFORMATION

WICHE promotes the sharing of information on higher education issues by gathering data and publishing reports, both printed and on the Internet, and by convening decision makers to develop options on a regional basis. WICHE publishes a regional fact book to inform policy makers concerning higher education trends and to provide multiyear and interstate comparisons. WICHE also collects annual tuition data.

A three-year project is in progress to develop policy plans for systematic change in higher education. A four-member Alaska delegation attended a workshop on

transforming higher education that included state legislators, regents, institution presidents and other executives, and students, and three represented the state at a forum on articulation and transfer. Other multistate forums are planned.

## FACULTY DIVERSITY

WICHE is a major partner in a national effort to develop more college faculty members from among minority groups. WICHE's Doctoral Scholars Program has provided support for 50 minority graduate students enrolled at the University of Alaska Fairbanks and in 11 other states. Currently, one Alaskan is a scholar.

## NORTH AMERICAN COLLABORATION

Working with regional and international partners, WICHE created the Consortium for North American Higher Education Collaboration. The Consortium enables institutions and states to explore initiatives involving education leaders in Canada, Mexico, and the U.S. Other founding partners are the University of Arizona, the Universidad Autónoma de Baja California, the Mexican Association for International Education, the University of British Columbia, and the California State University system, with support from the Ford Foundation.

Strategies are to expand dialogue and access to information through an Internet group; to foster collaboration among institutions committed to effecting social change along the U.S.-Mexico borderlands; and to publish research comparing higher education in the three countries.

## MENTAL HEALTH

WICHE's Mental Health Program enables states to save dollars, staff time, and administrative resources in providing mental health services. The program is a nucleus for influencing national and regional mental health policy. It offers comparative decision support information; research to better serve mental health clients; collaboration between educators and service providers; and improvements in management information systems. State mental health directors and advisers provide program direction.

5<sup>th</sup> February, 1999

Representative Eldon Mulder  
Capital Building  
Juneau, Alaska  
99801

Dear Sir:

I am writing in support  
of House Bill 27.

Within the past week I recently  
heard a radio news broadcast in  
which I learned you are  
sponsoring a legislative bill  
facilitating our Alaska residents  
to pursue higher educational  
opportunities, through the use  
of the VICE program. (Which I  
understand Alaska has not  
participated in since 1997.)

As a concerned resident  
and parent, I encourage our  
State to assist our young people  
to develop professionally, thereby  
bringing needed services to  
our State.

I am intimately aware of  
two young people wishing to  
go into the medical field.

One - our son - , now 24 years  
old, obtained a degree from  
Michigan State University and  
sought to enroll in a Master's  
Program in Physical Therapy.

He qualifies for such based on his undergraduate studies.

His friend, also near the same age, decides to enroll in Medical School having obtained his undergraduate degree.

Both young people have Alaska residency, however neither of the programs are available in Alaska.

The cost of the programs are also prohibitive without some financial assistance to them. They both had plans to apply & enroll in the WCHS Program - only to learn Alaska no longer participates.

Our son has also applied to an "outside" school only to be told the school was not accepting out of state residents.

Therefore, it appears my son & his friend will be forced to leave Alaska, establish residency in another State in order to pursue their higher education; and to make it somewhat affordable (by not having to pay out of state tuition).

I would encourage our State of Alaska to facilitate & support our young people in pursuit of higher education especially in fields not available through our Universities in Alaska.

in return, I believe, this would encourage our young people, in their sense of appreciation and dedication, and more likely have them return to Alaska.

Both of these individuals are very hard working, industrious and would bring credit to the people of this State. (Let's not send all our young people away due to the lack of availability.)

Thanking you for seeing this need, your time, support and interest in sponsoring House Bill 27.

Sincerely,  
Lina Lyle  
PO Box 370589  
Wasilla, Alaska  
99687

(907) 376-6414