

HB

16

ALASKA STATE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Interim Address:

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State Capitol
Room 204

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN COGHILL

SPONSOR STATEMENT

HB 16 SECONDARY BOARDING SCHOOLS

HB 16 puts into statute DOE's current practice. This legislation expands existing programs for students who don't have access to grades 9 through 12 qualify for a stipend in boarding schools by changing the entrance requirements.

Students get a choice of going to a school that has something different to offer than may be available in their hometown. This legislation by statute reimburses some boarding schools costs incurred by the district operating the program.

The legislation limits the program to schools already operating boarding schools on January 1, 2005 and sunsets in 2010 (five years). Three schools would qualify for the reimbursement: Nenana, Galena, and Bethel.

A per-pupil stipend will help pay for the students' monthly residential care, which includes meals and supervision twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. In addition a one round-trip between the student's community of residence and the school during the school year will be reimbursed if the district expends money for the trip.

The hold harmless section of this bill allows a student's district of residence to count a student for the ADM count even though the student is attending a secondary boarding school.

The department is required to submit a report to the legislature with performance evaluation and recommended actions for the future of funding boarding schools in the future at the end of the five year pilot project.

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Sectional For Committee Substitute for House Bill 16(RLS)

- Section 1. (a) Provides that a school district that was operating a secondary boarding school prior to January 1, 2004 could be reimbursed for the cost of operating the boarding school providing they have a suitable student dormitory and provide daily access to a public school offering the grades 9-12 classes.
- (b) The district can be reimbursed for a per-pupil stipend determined by the Department of Education and for one round trip per student that travels from their community.
- (c) Defines district as "a city or borough school district or a regional educational attendance area.

Also defines district secondary school boarding program as " a public school operated for a full school year by a district in which the domiciliary services are provided for students in grades nine through 12. The full school year was added to the language in the Special Committee on Education and this resulted in a reduction in the fiscal note of \$227,700.

- Section 2. Provides a hold harmless clause for school districts that have children move out of the district to attend a secondary boarding school. The students moving from the district would be counted in the average daily membership of the home district.
- Section 3. This is a sunset clause that repeals the substance of this bill on July 1, 2010.
- Section 4. Requires the Department of Education to submit to the governor and the legislature a report on the effectiveness of the boarding school programs and make recommendations that may include draft legislation for future boarding school programs.
- Section 5. Puts into place an effective date of July 1, 2005.

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2005 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Fiscal Note Number: 1
 Bill Version: HB 16
 (H) Publish Date: 3/3/05

Revision Date/Time (Note if correction): _____ Dept. Affected: Education & Early Development
 Title An Act relating to funding for school districts RDU K-12 Support
operating secondary school boarding programs..... Component Boarding Home Grants
 Sponsor Representative Coghill
 Requester (H) Special Committee on Education, HESS, Finance Component No. 148

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

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

| OPERATING EXPENDITURES | FY 2006 | FY 2007 | FY 2008 | FY 2009 | FY 2010 | FY 2011 |
|------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|------------|
| Personal Services | | | | | | |
| Travel | | | | | | |
| Contractual | | | | | | |
| Supplies | | | | | | |
| Equipment | | | | | | |
| Land & Structures | | | | | | |
| Grants & Claims | 1,227.0 | 1,227.0 | 1,227.0 | 1,227.0 | 1,227.0 | 0.0 |
| Miscellaneous | | | | | | |
| TOTAL OPERATING | 1,227.0 | 1,227.0 | 1,227.0 | 1,227.0 | 1,227.0 | 0.0 |

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| CAPITAL EXPENDITURES | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|

| | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| CHANGE IN REVENUES () | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|

FUND SOURCE (Thousands of Dollars)

| | | | | | | |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|------------|
| 1002 Federal Receipts | | | | | | |
| 1003 GF Match | | | | | | |
| 1004 GF | 1,227.0 | 1,227.0 | 1,227.0 | 1,227.0 | 1,227.0 | 0.0 |
| 1005 GF/Program Receipts | | | | | | |
| 1037 GF/Mental Health | | | | | | |
| Other (Specify Type—Do not abbreviate) | | | | | | |
| TOTAL | 1,227.0 | 1,227.0 | 1,227.0 | 1,227.0 | 1,227.0 | 0.0 |

Estimate of any current year (FY2004) cost: 0.0

Mark this box (X) if funding for this bill is included in the Governor's FY 2006 budget proposal:

POSITIONS

| | | | | | | |
|-----------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Full-time | | | | | | |
| Part-time | | | | | | |
| Temporary | | | | | | |

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)

This Act would create a pilot program, making available a monthly stipend to districts currently providing a residential boarding home program. This pilot program will be in place for five years, ending July 1, 2010. In addition to the monthly stipend, districts will be reimbursed for one round trip ticket per year for any boarding home student to travel within the state to attend the school in the district with the dormitory.

A community with an ADM of less than 10 will still be counted as a school if the decline is due to students enrolling in another district's secondary school boarding program.

Prepared by: Eddy Jeans, Director
 Division: School Finance
 Approved by: Karen Rehfeld, Deputy Commissioner
 Agency: Education & Early Development

Phone 465-8679
 Date/Time 1/26/05 3:16 PM
 Date 1/26/2005

Alaska Department of Education & Early Development
 Residential Programs
 Prepared by Elwin Blackwell

Fiscal Note No. 1 - HB 16

| District | Community | Capacity | FY05 Monthly Stipend | Yearly Cost | Estimated Round trip | Annual Airfair | Estimated Grant | Comments |
|-----------------|-----------|----------|----------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Galena | Galena | 100 | 577 | 519,300 | 800 | 80,000 | 599,300 | 180 day program |
| Lower Kuskokwim | Bethel | 35 | 490 | 154,350 | 500 | 17,500 | 171,850 | 180 day program |
| Nenana | Nenana | 96 | 472 | 407,808 | 500 | 48,000 | 455,808 | 180 day program |
| Totals | | 231 | | 1,081,458 | | 145,500 | 1,226,958 | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|------------------|----------|----|-----|--|--|--|--|-----------------------|
| Iditarod | Takotna | 40 | 490 | | | | | Inactive program |
| Northwest Arctic | Kotzebue | 40 | 577 | | | | | Inactive program |
| Nome - Beltz HS. | Nome | 40 | 577 | | | | | 2 week Voc-Ed program |

NOTE: CPI not available to update rates for FY06 at time of preparation.

Actual Cost of Boarding Schools

Galena Boarding School

| | <u>Actual Costs</u> | <u>HB 16 Share</u> |
|--------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Daily rate | \$51.00 | \$15.73 |
| Monthly Rate | \$1,516.00 | \$472.00 |
| Annual Rate | \$13,362.00 | \$4,248.00 |

Nenana Boarding School

| | | |
|--------------|----------------|------------|
| Daily rate | \$33.00 | \$15.73 |
| Monthly Rate | \$1,000.00 | \$472.00 |
| Annual Rate | \$10,000.00[1] | \$4,248.00 |

[1] Nenana Boarding School has a ten month school year

Nenana Student Living Center...

Developing Alaska's Most Valuable Resource

Sixty-six high school students from across the state of Alaska could be accepted to live in the state's most modern dormitory called Nenana Student Living Center (NSLC) and attend Nenana City School. In the past four years, over 250 students (with their parents support) have already made this choice. Of these students, about 80% have either returned this past year or have put in application to return next school year.

Why do students come to Nenana for an education? The reasons for coming are as diverse as the students living there. Students from larger areas seek more individualized attention; students from rural areas want more class offerings with certified teachers. A few students, coming from families currently experiencing some tough times, need the structure and stability dorm living offers. Most students come from stable families, but want to experience living more independently. In an application one parent spoke of the 'regression of funds for rural districts taking its toll'; many others expressed this same sentiment but in different words. Many parents of NSLC students feel that (for various reasons) their child's educational needs were not being met locally and thus they sought a quality education elsewhere. Why Nenana? What makes Nenana Student Living Center and Nenana City School unique?

In the state of Alaska there are three boarding schools: PERS in Galena, BABS in Bethel; and Mt. Edgecumbe in Sitka. They are just that—a school where students are also boarded; these schools are separate from the local public school at each site. The NSLC is unique in that it is a community wide project, planned and built to be used as a comfortable dormitory for students who want to attend the public school of Nenana. NSLC students attend school and freely interact with Nenana students. Another unique feature of NSLC is that four apartments were built within the facility enabling dorm parents to make the Living Center their home along with the students on a '24/7' basis, these dedicated dorm parents are able to provide nurturing support, guidance and consistency. There are many elements that make the NSLC a safe and secure environment: the security system with cameras that are in place, a night watchman hired throughout the week, as well as the dorm parents living on site.

NSLC is currently the only boarding home on the road system, only 50 miles from Fairbanks. This makes for easy access to medical facilities, college events, and cultural activities; many students also have extended families to visit there on weekends.

As well as adding diversity to the school, the addition of NSLC students has spurred implementation of many unique innovations (largely as a

result of Federal grants to education). These students perform better in our system than those of the schools that sent them. Why is that? We think it is due to innovations implemented in several key areas:

Academic

Transitional classes strengthen Math and English skills, meeting under-prepared students where they are and accelerating them to grade level. A study skills class further helps struggling students achieve academic standards. A computer based (Carnegie) math class is making a huge difference in students who have been unable to achieve "math success" in the past. Sunday through Thursday nights, students attend a mandatory study hall, operated by four skilled tutors. Those students who have completed all assignments have free choice of study activities, while those students who have been referred by teachers get additional tutoring to improve academic performance.

Cultural

Nenana students have many opportunities to learn from cultural instructors. They are offered training in how to mush a dog team and set up a winter camp using traditional and modern winter survival skills. Other projects include snow shoe and canoe building, beaver trapping and skinning, skin sewing, creating articles such as gloves, skin boots, beading dream-catchers, practicing Native singing and language, and putting on a potlatch. Our Inter-Tribal Dance Group has preformed around the state and is in great demand.

Personal Development

Leadership such as Close Up, summer camps, student orientation leadership training and an active NSLC student government help students mature and gain real life skills. Vocational training in career pathways including culinary arts, entrepreneurship, computer skills, business education, and more pathways are being developed. Art classes teach seeing and painting the world we live in, building and painting rustic furniture, painting Native and wildlife subjects, and marketing art.

Personal Support

Grandparent mentors work in the schools and Living Center with students, providing a caring presence and guidance in traditional values and skills. Three counselors assist with personal, academic and vocational development. There is a full time drug and alcohol prevention counselor for all grade levels utilizing Project Success curriculum. A vocational counselor teaches school to work and grant support offers students opportunities to explore careers and work as interns. A personal counselor meets individually with students to prepare for college or vocational schools at every step from awareness to scholarship and admission applications. A College Prep. class for juniors and seniors further assists students realize their dreams. Our proximity to

University of Alaska Fairbanks affords students a well-used resource for job fairs, career and college exposure and enrichment.

Finally, students maintain strong ties to home while living here. Communication is encouraged and supported through newsletters and by grant-funded parent visits to the Living Center, encouraging parents to remain involved in the education of their young people.

As a regional educational center, the Nenana Living Center is proving both innovative and successful.

For Further Information, Contact:

Ralph Lindquist
Dean of Students
P.O. 442
Nenana, AK 99760

20 Returning Students
42 New Students

* No High School Available

No students withdrew the first semester

Two students were dismissed

One dismissed student stayed in Nenana and the other went to school in Fairbanks.

| | | | | | |
|----|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|----|-----------------|
| 10 | Marlis | Scammon Bay | Lower Yukon | | |
| 10 | Stanley, Cody | Palmer | Mat-Su | 33 | |
| 10 | Valka, Vanessa | Anchorage (Tyonek) | Anchorage - Kenai Penn. | 34 | |
| 11 | Arrow, Tracy | Shageluk | Iditarod | 35 | |
| 11 | Beaver, Ledwina | Kongiganak | Lower Kuskokwim | 36 | |
| 11 | Dayton, Elizabeth * | Koyukuk | Yukon-Koyukuk | 37 | No local school |
| 11 | Dayton, Susan * | Koyukuk | Yukon-Koyukuk | 38 | No local school |
| 11 | Demientieff, Clinton | Holy Cross | Iditarod | 39 | |
| 11 | Esbenshade, Hannah | Yakutat | Yakutat S.D. | 40 | |
| 11 | Igkurak, Letha | Kongiganak | Lower Kuskokwim | 41 | |
| 11 | Ignatin, Jonyssa | Old Harbor | Kodiak Island SD | 42 | |
| 11 | Ivon, Isiah | Kongiganak | Lower Kuskokwim | 43 | |
| 11 | Jor Justin | Mtn. Village | Lower Yukon | 44 | |
| 11 | Kookesh, Kristie | Angoon | Chatham | 45 | |
| 11 | O'Brien, Matthew | Fairbanks | Fairbanks NSBSD | 46 | |
| 11 | Otto, Chrissie | Kongiganak | Lower Kuskokwim | 47 | |
| 11 | Redfox, Jerel | Mtn. Village | Lower Yukon | 48 | |
| 11 | Romer, Albert | Kipnuk | Lower Kuskokwim | 49 | |
| 11 | Sorensen, Daniel * | Alexander Creek | Mat-Su | 50 | No local school |
| 11 | Stephan, Robert | Tyonek | Kenai Peninsula | 51 | |
| 11 | Tritt, Donetta | Lower Kalskag | Kuspuk S.D. | 52 | |
| 11 | Waskey, Eusebuis | Mtn. Village | Lower Yukon | 53 | |
| 12 | Agwiak, Lois | Mtn. Village | Lower Yukon | 54 | |
| 12 | Alexie, Carolyn | Mtn. Village | Lower Yukon | 55 | |
| 12 | Berg, Kelly | Anchorage | Anchorage | 56 | |
| 12 | Brooks, Leah | Nenana | Nenana | 57 | |
| 12 | Christiansen, Heidi | Old Harbor | Kodiak Island SD | 58 | |
| 12 | Hamilton, Jorian | Shageluk | Iditarod | 59 | |
| 12 | James, Kyle | Manley Hot Sprgs | Yukon-Koyukuk | 60 | |
| 12 | Johns, Sophia | Copper Center | Copper River S.D. | 61 | |
| 12 | Kookesh, Mona | Angoon | Chatham | 62 | |
| 12 | Korth, Rhonda * | Ft. Yukon | Yukon-Flats | 63 | No local school |
| 12 | Shewfelt, Russell | Fairbanks | Fairbanks NSBSD | 64 | |
| 12 | Solari, Roberta | Beaver | Yukon-Flats | 65 | |
| 12 | Stamm, Timothy | Nikolski | Aleutian Region | 66 | |
| 12 | Stanley, Bethany | Palmer | Mat-Su | 67 | |

NSLC 04-05 Students

Nenana Student Living Center - Through end of 1st Semester

| 2004-05 GRADE | NAME | VILLAGE | DISTRICT | Count | |
|------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|-------|-----------------|
| 9 | Agwiak, Esther | Mtn. Village | Lower Yukon | 1 | |
| 9 | Agwiak, Theresa | Mtn. Village | Lower Yukon | 2 | |
| 9 | Beaver, Albert III | Kongiganak | Lower Kuskokwim | 3 | |
| 9 | DelaRosa, Keith | Mtn. Village | Lower Yukon | 4 | |
| 9 | Moon, Amber | Anchorage | Anchorage | 5 | |
| 9 | Okpealuk, Marilyn | Kotzebue | NW Arctic BSD | 6 | |
| 9 | Peters, Margie | Holy Cross | Iditarod | 7 | |
| 9 | Semaken, Breanna | Kaltag | Yukon-Koyukuk | 8 | |
| 9 | Sorensen, Frederick * | Alexander Creek | Mat-Su | 9 | No local school |
| 9 | Winer, Nellie | Beaver | Yukon-Flats | 10 | |
| 10 | Agwiak, Arielle | Mtn. Village | Lower Yukon | 11 | |
| 10 | Alexie, Thomas | Kipnuk | Lower Kuskokwim | 12 | |
| 10 | Attie, Michael | Kipnuk | Lower Kuskokwim | 13 | |
| 10 | Behee, Derrick | Fairbanks | Fairbanks NSBSD | 14 | |
| 10 | Brooks, Molly | Nenana | Nenana | 15 | |
| 10 | Chase, Katrina | Tuntutuliak | Lower Kuskokwim | 16 | |
| 10 | David, Chris | Kongiganak | Lower Kuskokwim | 17 | |
| 10 | Esmailka, Danielle | Kaltag | Yukon-Koyukuk | 18 | |
| 10 | Esmailka, Megan | Kaltag | Yukon-Koyukuk | 19 | |
| 10 | Hamilton, Stephanie | Shageluk | Iditarod | 20 | |
| 10 | Handley, Michael | Kipnuk | Lower Kuskokwim | 21 | |
| 10 | Korth, Krin * | Ft. Yukon - Brooks Range | Yukon-Flats | 22 | No local school |
| 10 | Lolnitz, Dax | Koyukuk | Yukon-Koyukuk | 23 | |
| 10 | McCord, Rayanne | Anchorage | Anchorage | 24 | |
| 10 | Moon, Amy | Anchorage (Tyonek) | Anchorage - Kenai Penn. | 25 | |
| 10 | O'Brien, Charlie | Fairbanks | Fairbanks NSBSD | 26 | |
| 10 | Okpealuk, Dawn | Kotzebue | NW Arctic BSD | 27 | |
| 10 | Panipchuk, Elizabeth | Unalakleet | Bering Strait S D | 28 | |
| 10 | Peters, Kimberly | Holy Cross | Iditarod | 29 | |
| 10 | Romer, Kristen | Kipnuk | Lower Kuskokwim | 30 | |
| 10 | Standifer, Marcy | Tyonek | Kenai Peninsula | 31 | |

House EDUCATION Minute



Mar 01, 2005

HB 16-SCHOOL FUNDS RELATED TO BOARDING SCHOOLS

CHAIR NEUMAN announced that the first order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 16 "An Act relating to funding for school districts operating secondary school boarding programs and to funding for school districts from which boarding students come; and providing for an effective date."

5:33:35 PM

RYNNIEVA MOSS, Staff to Representative John Coghill, Alaska State Legislature, presented the sponsor statement for HB 16 on behalf of Representative Coghill. She explained that HB 16 puts into practice what the U.S. Department of Education, (DOE), currently performs in terms of stipends, and expands it. As of now, she said, the students that do not have access to grades 9-12 qualify for the stipend. She pointed out that this bill would expand [the benefit of the stipend] to other communities. She related that there is a "hold-harmless" so that if a child leaves a community, and the student enrollment [of that community] decreases below 10, they wouldn't lose their basic education package. She summarized that [HB 16] is a pilot project, "sunsets" in 5 years, and is limited to schools that are operating with boarding schools on Jan 1, 200

REPRESENTATIVE WILSON asked if Bethel was included in this legislation.

MS. MOSS explained that [HB 16] includes Bethel, Galena, and Nenana.

5:35:24 PM

EDDY JEANS, Director, School Finance, Department of Education and Early Development, explained that the State Board of Education passed Resolution 01.2005 in support of funding for residential programs in: Galena, lower Kuskokwim and Nenana. He related that the state board recognizes that these areas have difficulty in operating residential programs without state funding. He reminded the committee that this bill passed the House of Representatives last year. He said that HB 16 is a five year pilot program, and it would affect the three school districts previously mentioned: Galena, Nenana, and Lower Kuskokwim, the program in Bethel.

REPRESENTATIVE WILSON asked Mr. Jeans to explain how the Average Daily Membership, (ADM), is calculated and how the schools get their funding.

MR. JEANS said that the child is counted for foundation funding purposes, in the district and school that they are receiving educational services. He related that HB 16 provides the three

communities mentioned with additional support covering the residential component of that program, including one, free round-trip airfare for children in the program.

5:37:47 PM

REPRESENTATIVE WILSON inquired as to the children being counted in the district where they came from in addition to where they are receiving education.

MR. JEANS explained, "that under Section 2 [of HB 16], there is a "hold harmless" provision, that if, for some reason, a community has 10 children, and one of them goes to one of these three boarding schools, that community would be "held-harmless" and be funded as if they had 10 children."

REPRESENTATIVE GATTO restated, "the school gets funded a blanket number of dollars for the school of 10; it isn't like we're counting that kid as adding to the amount of money the school receives, correct?"

MR. JEANS said that Representative Gatto was correct.

REPRESENTATIVE GATTO referred to page 2, line 9 [of HB 16], and inquired as to the definition of a full school year.

MR. JEANS stated that section of the bill refers to the school year, as defined by statute, which is 180 days.

REPRESENTATIVE GATTO inquired as to the development of a revised school year that would promote a longer summer for boarders to spend with their families.

MR. JEANS responded that discussions related to this idea did not progress last year.

5:41:28 PM

REPRESENTATIVE WILSON attempted to clarify the reasoning behind the "hold-harmless" provision.

MR. JEANS stated that, "the "hold-harmless" says that you will be funded as if you had 10 kids."

REPRESENTATIVE WILSON inquired as to the "hold harmless" provision acting as a safeguard against the closing of small schools.

MR. JEANS stated that is correct.

JIM SMITH, Superintendent, Galena School District, introduced himself and stated that he was available to answer questions.

REPRESENTATIVE GATTO inquired as to the current number of students in boarding schools.

MR. SMITH explained that the Galena School District is in its eighth year running a residential school program and has 85 students. He said that the program is strongly directed toward vocational education and provides an opportunity for students in

the Interior to experience vocational education training that is difficult for smaller schools to offer. He explained that with 40 Galena High School students and 85 residential students, there is a population base that allows for an aggressive search of support and funding for these kinds of programs.

5:45:10 PM

REPRESENTATIVE GATTO inquired as to how the successful passage of HB 16 would affect students.

MR. SMITH stated that the operational costs associated with the boarding school programs vary. In Nenana, he explained, there is one school facility, and the boarding students come and go to the main [combined] school, requiring only one set of staff. In the Galena district, the boarding school is on the Galena airbase facilities and there is a separate high school program. He related that shuttle buses transport students to both facilities so that vocational education classes are available to all students. He emphasized that the passage of HB 16 would insure support for the [boarding school] program for another year. He stated that the teaching staff costs \$1,200,000 for 7 teachers, an administrator, counselors, and the dorm staff: the 13 dorm staff members, and a full-time counselor cost \$650,000; the meal program, feeding 85 students and the adults that run the dorm costs \$550,000. He said that he can fund the teaching staff through the student's ADM but the meal program and the dormitory staff are funded by securing money in different ways.

REPRESENTATIVE GATTO asked about the expected ADM added to this legislation.

5:48:31 PM

MR. SMITH said that HB 16 would bring an additional \$599,300 on top of the current ADM.

5:49:22 PM

REPRESENTATIVE WILSON questioned how many of the 85 [mentioned] students are in the boarding school.

MR. SMITH said that there are 85 [residential] high school students and 120 students in the "village school".

REPRESENTATIVE WILSON asked how many more students could be served.

MR. SMITH said that there is not enough funding to serve additional students. He added that if Galena develops the nuclear power plant that is in exploration now, the power costs for the school will decrease and if the airbase becomes available, 500 students could enroll without having to build a new school to house them. The issue of classroom space is a challenge, he said. The other dorms on the base are being used by maintenance people and the airforce. He opined that there is some value to continue involvement in this process because serving students on a "voluntary boarding school profile" will expand in the future, and Galena is a good site.

5:52:18 PM

REPRESENTATIVE WILSON stated that there are many schools that need more funding. She said that it is a shame that [the legislature] can't fund schools equally.

CHAIR NEUMAN inquired as to summer programs and the usage of [Galena] school facilities year-round. He asked about the percentage of students being served that are "at-risk" or in need of a "safe haven."

MR. SMITH said that Galena has served as an "Answer Camp" site for many years. He explained that this past summer, through grants, "health practices" workshops were offered to interested high school age children. He opined that Galena could serve as a regional learning center. He continued:

I think we have that potential and believe that when you have dorm facilities and meal programs, you attract a lot of training and we have those kinds of things going on, like airport maintenance, we have dispatcher training and aviation ... the facility is ... ideal for summer kinds of ventures and we're open to all of those. In answer to your second question, I guess that's what keeps us in the business ... I would venture a guess that half of our kids in that residential school program are kids that are seeking safe harbor in some capacity or another. They're coming from tough situations ... ours is not an intent to close down rural schools, I am particularly sensitive to rural schools and have been 33 years a teacher and administrator in small communities and schools and I know about consolidation and I know about school closure and that is not something that we want to be a part of ... our community embraces these additional children as family ... but if we can't come to some consistent funding source, it won't be there much longer because we have had our hand out ... to places like federal delegation and ... the state has to come to a plan at some point how they are going to support these things, and if the attributes of Mt. Edgecumbe are good, then the attributes of Nenana and Galena should be good as well.

5:56:55 PM

CHAIR NEUMAN inquired as to the percentage of Galena High School students pursuing higher education.

MR. SMITH stated that the programs that Galena offers are products of the accelerated efforts in terms of staff development. He said that all of the programs have [test] scores that are above the adequate yearly progress, (AYP), cut lines, including the residential school program. He said that students that come to Galena High School will get a solid education.

REPRESENTATIVE GARA stated that he supports HB 16. He said that he voiced his concerns about HB 20, and that he supports it. He excused himself as he had to leave the meeting.

REPRESENTATIVE GATTO inquired as to where the additional \$6,000 will be spent [if HB 16 passes].

MR. SMITH stated that the cost per residential student is \$20,000. He said that Galena High School receives \$11,000 per student in the "brick and mortar" and that [combined with the additional \$6,000] would raise the amount to \$17,000 per student toward teaching, lodging and feeding. He explained that any additional funds will have to be secured through grants.

MR. SMITH explained that there are many labor challenges associated with creating alternate calendars for the school year. He opined that if it could work, a shorter, more intense, residential school program could be very beneficial to students.

6:01:32 PM

REPRESENTATIVE THOMAS inquired as to what parents contribute to the costs associated with this schooling. He asked how students are selected for this program.

6:01:49 PM

MR. SMITH stated that there is an open enrollment, and the only screening involves "citizenship" issues. He explained that a dormitory environment requires a certain level of "citizenship" and if there are applicants with behavior and discipline issues, they would not be favorable applicants. He said that, except for "citizenship" issues, applicants are enrolled up to 85 students.

REPRESENTATIVE THOMAS opined that residential programs erode small community schools.

MR. SMITH stated that the Galena School District is sensitive to that issue, and has had students leave to attend Mt. Edgecumbe. He said that the Galena School District has always been a proponent of creating selection for parents and students and giving them an opportunity. In reality, he said, "if that child needs or has a desire to attend somewhere else or look for services somewhere else ... what we do have ... appears to be safe harbor for some of them."

6:06:38 PM

REPRESENTATIVE WILSON inquired as to how HB 16 will affect other schools and their ability to enroll additional students.

6:07:18 PM

EDDY JEANS said that both the Galena School District and Nenana School District could support more students, but would need additional funding to do so. He also explained that these are voluntary programs where families are making the choice to attend because of the expanded programs that are offered there.

6:08:54 PM

REPRESENTATIVE THOMAS expressed his dissatisfaction with the mentioning of "expanded school programs." He said that this

gives some students opportunities that other students aren't able to take advantage of.

CHAIR NEUMAN mentioned that residential programs provide a home for kids 24 hours a day. He said that providing this requires additional funding.

REPRESENTATIVE GATTO inquired as to how the Galena School is funded and if the funding continues during the summer months when the students are not attending.

6:10:31 PM

EDDY JEANS stated that the monthly stipend would be pro-rated to a daily rate to reimburse districts. He explained that the intent is to provide funding for the residential component for a 180 day school year.

REPRESENTATIVE GATTO asked if a short course of students could be added [to Galena High School] over the summer and if the school could be used instead of sitting empty.

MR. SMITH stated that he believes that this is possible but there are labor challenges with teachers.

REPRESENTATIVE WILSON said that she supports HB 16 and that it will make a real difference for kids from all over the state. She commented that all schools are in need of funding and that it is a shame that more money isn't allocated to all of them.

6:13:24 PM

SANDY EGELSTEN, counselor, Nenana Student Living Center, introduced two students that wanted to testify in support of HB 16.

DAN SORENSON, Alexander Creek, stated his support of HB 16. He explained that there aren't schools where his family lives. He said that his mother home schooled he and his siblings but as they got older, she wasn't equipped to teach them. He expressed his appreciation for the Nenana Student Living Center.

REPRESENTATIVE WILSON inquired as to why he chose the Nenana Student Living Center, as opposed to high schools in Anchorage.

MR. SORENSON explained that his entire family would have had to move in order for him to go to school somewhere else.

6:15:26 PM

SOPHIA JOHN, Copper Center, stated that she was not doing well in the high school that she was attending. She explained that after attending the Nenana Student Living Center, she is doing well.

SANDY EGELSTEN stated that other students, as well as the Dean and Superintendent [of the Nenana School District], wanted to testify on HB 16 but could not meet there at the rescheduled time. She also explained that the Nenana School District is asking families to pay \$1000 per year to help out with the costs

associated with residential schooling. She emphasized that [for the Nenana Student Living Center] consistent funding is needed more than anything.

6:18:23 PM

REPRESENTATIVE GATTO inquired as to the number of students that are enrolled in Nenana School, what the attrition rate is, and the number of families that actually contribute \$1000 for their children's school year.

MS. EGELSTEN stated that there are 61 students enrolled, there is about a 10 percent attrition rate, and that a good percentage of families have made the monetary contribution.

REPRESENTATIVE GATTO stated that sometimes federal money is available to native students. He asked if the Nenana School has looked into this possible contribution source.

MS. EGELSTEN stated that she would redirect those questions to the Dean and the Superintendent of the Nenana School District.

REPRESENTATIVE SALMON thanked her for her and the students for their testimony.

REPRESENTATIVE SALMON moved to report HB 16 out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes. There being no objection, HB 16 was reported out of the House Special Committee on Education.

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Fairbanks Daily News-Miner

Coghill bill looks at boarding stipends

By TOM MORAN

Saturday, February 14, 2004 - News-Miner Juneau Bureau

JUNEAU—House Majority Leader John Coghill, R-North Pole, has introduced a bill that would offer additional state money to school districts that operate boarding schools.

House Bill 425, which Coghill introduced on Feb. 4, would let such school districts claim a stipend for each pupil in their respective boarding schools in order to help pay boarding expenses and also to pay for students' transport to and from the school at the beginning and end of the school year. The bill would add to a more limited stipend system in place today.

Coghill said he introduced the bill based on discussions with the Nenana school. He said he doesn't know whether there would be support for the bill in a state Legislature focused on a tight budget.

"I'm still going around looking for support, because it does have a cost to it," he said. "Before I begin the discussion of where we get the money from, I want to find out if there's support for looking for that money."

According to Eddy Jeans, school finance manager for the state Department of Education, the state already provides stipends ranging from \$460 to \$562 per student per month, plus the plane fare, to districts that operate boarding schools. But those only apply to students who do not have public high schools in their own districts. Coghill's proposal would apply those stipends to all students who attend boarding schools, even those who have the option of attending school at home.

"The proposal mirrors the current system," Jeans said. "The big thing here is that distinction of whether or not the kids have a secondary program in their home community."

Jeans said the purpose of the money would go to help the districts pay the additional costs of housing students.

"We don't have a program that provides school districts with (money to support) the residential side of a boarding school environment," he said.

Coghill's bill would apply to boarding schools in Nenana, Galena, Takotna, Bethel, Nome and Kotzebue, but not to Mount Edgecumbe in Sitka, which is run by the state.

The stipend received by the schools would vary regionally and be determined by the Department of Education. The measure doesn't have any specific numbers attached to it, but according to department estimates, the added stipends would cost about \$1.79 million per year, including \$445,000 for Nenana and \$586,000 for Galena. The current stipend program costs \$185,000 a year, so the whole program would run almost \$2 million.

In addition, the bill would allow school districts and schools to stay open if their student counts drop below state minimums solely because a student or students leave to attend state boarding schools.

Coghill said more work needs to be done on the bill, but said he wanted to drop it in it before this year's Feb. 15 deadline for introducing personal legislation.

"Really, all I'm looking for is trying to figure out what are all their needs, because I've only talked to the Nenana one," he said.

Jeans said the Department of Education has not taken a position on the bill at this point and said he expected legislators' reaction to it would depend on whether they could come up with the money while still meeting Gov. Frank Murkowski's budget goals.

The bill has been referred to the House Education, Finance, and Health, Education and Social Services committees.

Reporter Tom Moran can be reached at tmoran@newsminer.com or (907) 463-4893.

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Nenana considers boarding school

Saturday, January 09, 1999

By **JEFF RICHARDSON**
Staff Writer

The Nenana School District has roomy facilities, a modern computer lab, a nice auto shop and plenty of technical equipment. But it doesn't have enough students.

Since the district's one school was built two decades ago, its enrollment has been on a steady decline. Today it is only about half full.

To fill the void, the school board and community hope to attract students from outside the district, house them at a boarding home by night and have them attend high school during the day.

The plan, still in its early stages, would add as many as 102 students to the district -- enough to fill the school.

"Our underlying concern is we have more school than students," said Nenana school board member Mike Holz. "We're only half full, but we have to pay the fixed costs of running the entire building."

The boarding home has become a hot topic in Nenana this year, seen by supporters as both a way to stop the enrollment drain and justify the cost of running a school big enough for 200 students.

Both the city and school district are pushing the plan, which would ideally draw high school students from around the state.

"We would take anyone from any area," said superintendent Terry Bentley. "I can even see us getting kids coming down from Fairbanks."

School officials have not determined what type of facility they would build or how they would pay for it. Cost estimates range from \$2 million to \$5 million.

Nor have they notified the Alaska Department of Education about the plan. Although school districts with boarding homes aren't required to

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discuss such moves with the Education Department, they have in the past looked to Juneau for money to run them.

Aside from Mount Edgecumbe High School -- the state-run boarding school in Sitka -- a handful of smaller facilities have emerged throughout the state. Galena and Takotna have small charter schools that operate as boarding homes. The Lower Kuskokwim School District plans to open a boarding home in Bethel next year.

This is actually the third time the Nenana school district has considered building a boarding school to boost its sagging enrollment. The other efforts faded, however.

"This isn't new," said school board president Endil Moore. "It had been looked at a time ago, and we're just looking at it harder."

The school board has put the issue on a fast track, with community officials meeting every two weeks to shape the plan. Some particularly optimistic boosters are hoping to have a home open for the 1999-2000 school year.

Holz, who works at Nenana Lumber, said nobody in the construction industry is taking that time line seriously. Without financing, price estimates, or even a design in place, he said there is little chance a new school will be ready in eight months. And he said there is no guarantee it will happen at all.

"A lot of people got excited at our last meeting, but I don't think those are realistic people," Holz said.

The school, however, does appear to have a market. The results of a feasibility study indicate the boarding home has a significant base of potential students.

The new school would take advantage of Nenana's well-developed but under-used vocational facilities. Officials believe they could lure students from small schools by offering programs the students wouldn't have at home.

"The people we would target would be people who need job skills and life skills," Holz said.

Nenana also expects to draw from Mount Edgecumbe, which had a 160-student waiting list last year. Officials believe many of those students would be willing to come to school in the Interior.

The model has worked in other areas. In just its second year, the Galena School District has already seen demand for its boarding school double to 45 students. The district expects to fill its 100-student school within a few years.



"There's a need for boarding schools," said Helen Mwarey, a registrar at the Galena school. "Look at how many Mount Edgecumbe is turning away, and I think it shows a large interest that that many students are applying."



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School officials reject boarding school idea

September 01, 2000

By AMANDA BOHMAN
Staff Writer

Officials with Interior school districts oppose the idea of pooling education resources in the Bush to create regional boarding schools.

The concept would mean closing an as-of-yet undetermined number of village high schools, they said. Boarding schools, most said, would disrupt families and erode communities forced to close their schools.

"What you are doing is so disastrous I'm having a hard time getting the words out," said Karen Dempster, superintendent of the Yukon Koyukuk School District.

Dempster was one of about two dozen people, representing the eight Bush school districts in the Interior, to attend a meeting on boarding schools.

She echoed the worries of most attendees that lawmakers, who have been floating the idea in Bush communities for about 45 days, are trying to sell the idea instead of gathering feedback.

"I'm sitting here almost feeling like this is a done deal," she told Dale Anderson, the legislative aide who detailed the plan.

Anderson presented the idea to a group of mostly Alaska Native rural educators, who were in Fairbanks for a two-day Rural Educators Conference, which ended Thursday, at the Chena River Convention Center.

A group of legislators on the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee favors the boarding school concept and has formed a rural boarding schools task force to look into it.

"This is all in an effort to find people to help sit around the table in this regional school program," Anderson said. "We heard that rural students want a choice."

The idea is to improve education programs in the Bush allowing students to prepare for both a city and a rural lifestyle.

Right now, because of the vast geographic expanse outside Alaska's metropolitan areas, this goal is not being met efficiently, Anderson said. "The desire is not to put one person down for another. The desire is to expand."

Rep. Gene Therriault, R-North Pole, a task force member who spent a few days this summer living with a family in a village near Bethel, said he's heard support for the boarding school idea.



Conference-goers, however, pointed out that most of the people who support the project are from communities that would likely have the proposed boarding schools in their villages.

"I represent 93 communities and I haven't heard that support," replied Sen. Georgianna Lincoln, D-Rampart.

Lincoln lambasted the pro-boarding schools group, which included Therriault, Anderson and Sen. Gary Wilken, R-Fairbanks, along with two other aides. She criticized the lack of representation from the Bush caucus on the task force. The task force is a 10-member group, primarily of Republicans. Sen. Al Adams, D-Kotzebue, is the only Bush caucus member.

Lincoln favors improving current schools instead of closing smaller schools in favor of fewer, larger ones. "Let's bring quality education to our kids, not the other way around," she added.

Decades ago, boarding schools were the foundation of formal education in the Bush, but they were eliminated as the primary way of teaching Bush high school students. A high number of homesick students dropped out and that fact was brought up supporting their eventual demise.

The educators feel it is just too soon to begin overhauling Bush education, particularly since districts are just beginning to examine the results of newly implemented standardized testing.

"We just put in the benchmark exam. Let's give this a chance to see what it does," Dempster said.

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AMENDMENT

OFFERED IN THE SENATE
TO: CSHB 16(RLS)

BY SENATOR ELTON

- 1 Page 2, line 10:
- 2 Delete "operated for a full school year by a district"
- 3
- 4 Page 2, line 11, following "12":
- 5 Insert "and that is operated for a full school year by a district"

ASSOCIATION OF ALASKA SCHOOL BOARDS

Advocates for Alaska's Youth

Statement of the Association of Alaska School Boards on HB 16 To the Senate HESS Committee April 25, 2005

AASB supports expanding the Boarding Home Program to provide adequate funding for locally controlled and operated, regional boarding high schools throughout the state.

Passage of a boarding schools/charter school law in 1997 (ASL Ch. 113) allows for the creation of boarding schools specifically not funded by the state. AASB would like to see that changed to provide students with the option of attending a larger, regional boarding high school operated by a school district.

The State of Alaska currently provides paid tuition and paid room and board for rural students desiring to attend Mt. Edgecumbe school without regard to local availability of high school programs. It also provides students within urban settings with the opportunity to attend the state run boarding school. The number of students requesting enrollment at Mt. Edgecumbe School exceeds the space available.

Many students in small village high schools now desire the educational and extra-curricular opportunities found at larger, centralized high school sites. The distance from Northern and Interior villages, to Mt. Edgecumbe, however, may deter some students from enrolling. Galena, Nenana and Bethel now offer boarding school programs that provide an alternative to some areas of the state.

SENATE COMMITTEE REPORT

DATE: 4/19/05

FURTHER: Finance

DATE TURNED
IN TO OFFICE: 5.06.05

Health, Education and Social Services Committee considered CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 16(RLS)

HB 16 SCHOOL FUNDS RELATED TO BOARDING SCHOOLS

"An Act relating to funding for school districts operating secondary school boarding programs, to funding for school districts from which boarding students come, and to the effectiveness of district secondary school boarding programs; and providing for an effective date."

and recommends:

- be replaced with _____ CS _____ (_____)
- adopt previous _____ CS _____ (_____)
- attached amendment(s)
- adopt Letter of Intent by _____ Committee
- further referral to _____ Committee

CS Senate Bill:

- Same Title
- New Title

SCS House Bill:

- Same Title
- Technical Title Change
- New Title w/ SCR # _____

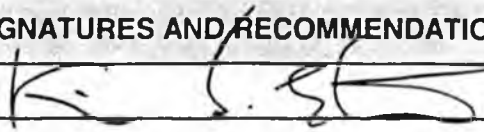
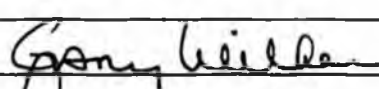
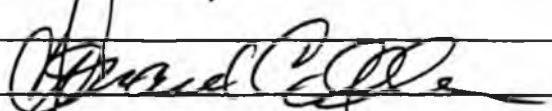
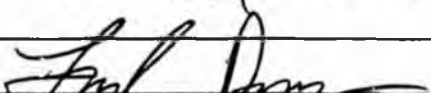
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