

**02/01/13
PRESENTA-
TION:
WE THE
PEOPLE OF
ALASKA**

<TARGET><BILL></BILL><SUBJECT>02-01-13 PRESENTATION WE
THE PEOPLE OF
ALASKA</SUBJECT><COMM>SEDC28</COMM></TARGET>



We the People of Alaska



Alaska Studies - Challenges

Coordination: Approach, Resources, Curriculum

Inconsistent across the state, school districts

Support

Educator training, course materials, student resources

Student Engagement: What does it mean to be Alaskan?

Students lack excitement, continue to struggle to connect past events with present issues, with their own Alaskan identity



We the People of Alaska

Understanding the Obligations of Citizenship

A unique state with unique responsibilities

Place-Based Learning

Connecting young citizens to where they live

Civic Engagement

Combining education with action



Goals

- Stronger civic and political engagement
- Provide a foundation from which students can gain a greater understanding of the current issues facing our state
- Students inspired by their own learning and investigation
- Develop teamwork skills through problem-solving
- Demonstrate critical thinking skills by thoroughly understanding a diverse array of topics

Building Blocks

CITIZENSHIP

NATURAL
RESOURCES

ALASKA
NATIVES

GOVERNING
ENTITIES

ECONOMY

ALASKA
MODEL



Building Blocks

CITIZENSHIP

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Citizenship

- What motivated Alaska to seek Statehood?
- Why did Alaska hold a Constitutional Convention and how did the delegates create the State Constitution?
- Section 1.1 of the Alaska State Constitution asserts, “all persons have corresponding obligations to the people and to the State.” What are these obligations?

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Natural Resources

- The passage of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) came after a large national debate over the importance of development versus conservation. How should a balance between the two be determined?
- What role did land ownership play in constructing the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System?
- Is the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MFCMA) effective at combating overfishing? Why or why not?

Sample questions and responses

Why did Alaska hold a Constitutional Convention and how did the delegates create the State Constitution?

An example response could describe the motivations for statehood and why leaders thought creating a Constitution could spur on the process. It should include a description of the format of the Convention and mention significant contributions from specific individuals. It would be useful to explain the rules for holding subsequent Constitutional Conventions and explain current issues that could lead to a revision of the Constitution (e.g., whether the attorney general should be appointed or elected).

How does Alaska's geography impact its economy? Explain the significance of natural resources and the revenue they generate.

A response could include a discussion of Alaska's significance as a strategic military outpost in WWII. It could also mention Alaska's role as a primary producer and the attempts to process natural resources in Alaska (e.g., timber, fish, and petroleum). It might also mention that technology and the internet have created many jobs in which the physical location of the worker is not an issue, a potentially valuable source of employment for Alaskans. Finally, it could reflect on Alaska's role as an Arctic state and the importance of this on an international scale.

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Alaska Natives

- How did the Treaty of Cession between the United States and Russia handle the Alaska Natives living in the territory?
- What was the impact of the Alaska Native civil rights movement?
- What is the importance of the subsistence lifestyle to rural Alaska?

Building Blocks



Governing Entities

- How does the system of regional Native corporations established in Alaska compare to arrangements to resolve aboriginal land claims elsewhere?
- How is tribal citizenship different from state or federal citizenship?
- What is the relationship between the State of Alaska and the federal government? Is each dependent on the other?

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Economy

- How does Alaska's geography impact its economy?
- What fiscal challenges face the state of Alaska in the future?
- To what extent is Alaska dependent on international trade?

Building Blocks



Alaska Model

- Why was the Permanent Fund created?
- What energy resources are available in Alaska and how do they affect the state?
- How does the concept of the commons relate to mineral rights and leasing?

Response

Teacher

Excited with unique approach, access to support

Student

Greater incentives and responsibility, access to resources

Community

Enjoy being involved, provide subject matter expertise

Implementation – next steps



Phase One

Anchorage
Fairbanks
Juneau



Phase Two

Barrow
Ketchikan
Kodiak
Dutch Harbor
Dillingham
Sitka
Yakutat
Tok
Glennallen
Kenai
Nome
Kotzebue
Bethel

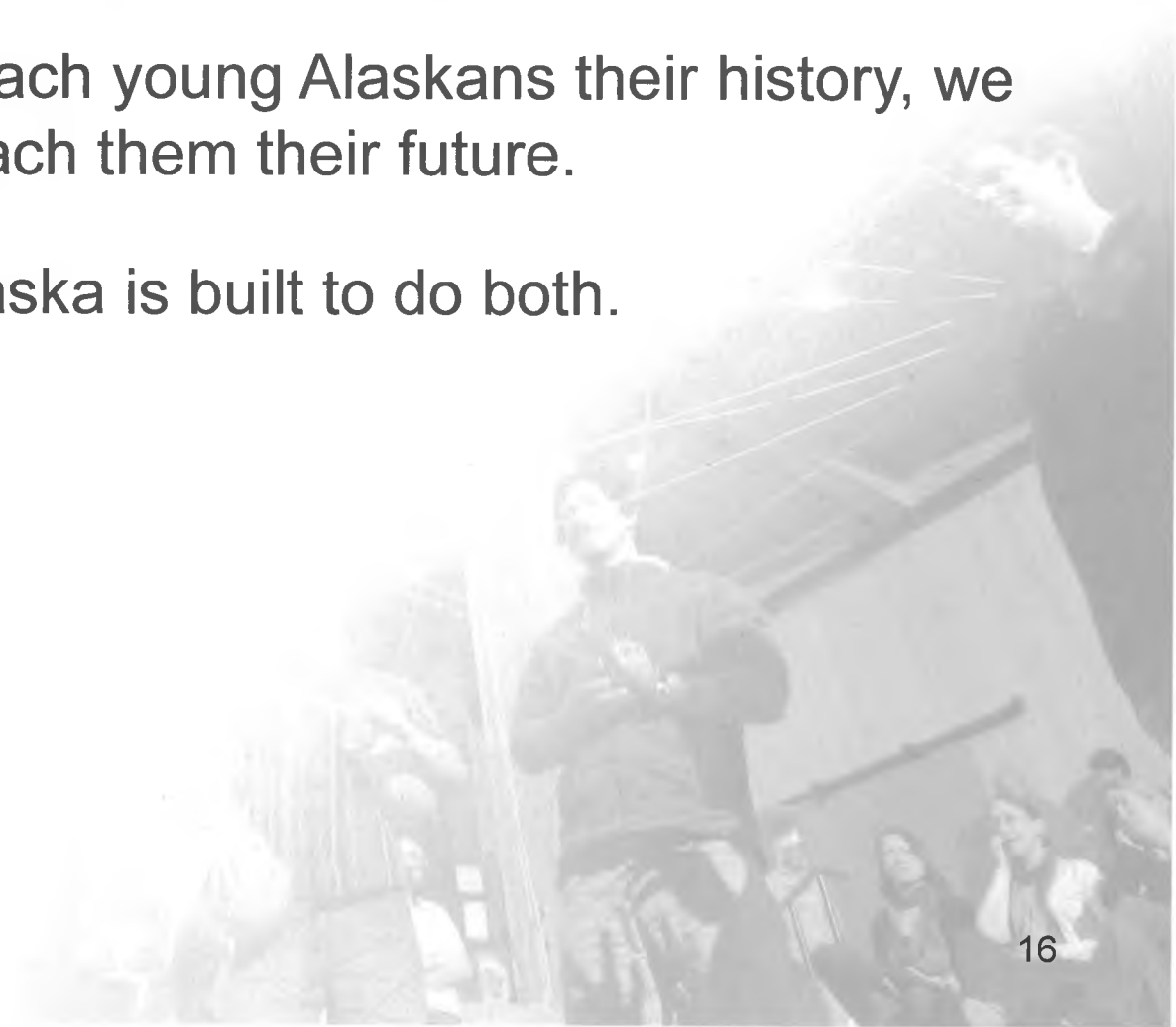


Preparing a Next Generation

It is not enough to teach young Alaskans their history, we must find ways to teach them their future.

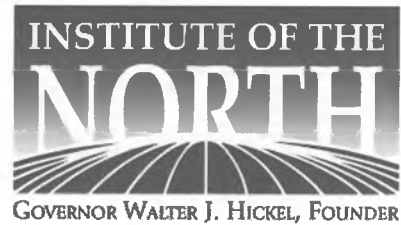
We the People of Alaska is built to do both.

Thank you!





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Over the course of the last six months, the Institute of the North has been developing a program to engage students with Alaska's rich history and critical issues facing the state today. In 2013, we hope to continue and expand the implementation of *We the People of Alaska* as a key supplement to Alaska Studies high school courses. This program – already receiving enthusiastic responses from teachers in Anchorage – will build teamwork and critical thinking skills, as well as enhance students' interest in and understanding of Alaska's economic, political and civic framework, producing informed citizens ready to engage in the future of the state.

The Institute of the North has received \$50,000 in matching funds, which have supported program development and implementation, and we have heard strong interest from many that this innovative program will find broad-based support. Would you consider contributing to what promises to be an outstanding addition to the Alaska Studies program? Below is a more complete description. If you would like to follow up with any questions or in support of this effort, please contact us directly.

We the People of Alaska is modeled after the Center for Civic Education's We the People program, funded until recently under the Education for Democracy Act to promote civic competence and responsibility across the nation. More than 30 million students have participated in some level of the We the People program, and a recent study found that alumni of the high school program demonstrate stronger civic and political engagement, with 91% of respondents voting in the last presidential election.

With a similar goal of inspiring civic engagement and knowledge in young Alaskans, *We the People of Alaska* is to be a statewide competition of simulated legislative hearings in which students present their research and opinions on important Alaska topics. The program is comprised of six units: citizenship, natural resources, Alaska Natives, governing entities, the economy, and the Alaska model. These areas were chosen for their importance to the development of Alaska and, due to the content overlap with current curriculum, because they do not require any additional teaching time from current teachers.

While a fundamental shift from how the Alaska Studies class is currently taught, the program addresses many of the current challenges in Alaska Studies. In particular, *We the People of Alaska* demands student engagement through competition. Because it is student-driven, students are inspired by their own learning and investigation. Students are grouped into teams, with specific questions to research and answer. A good response to these questions typically requires that several team-members answer, offering different points of view when possible

and supporting their opinions with facts such as current events, court cases, statistics, and quotes from experts in the field.

Preparation involves extensive research, not only for their written response, but also for potential questions from the judges as well. While students must understand the historical basis of their topic, they also expand their interest in current issues, since much of their most interesting material comes from newspapers and other media in the form of current events. Students develop teamwork skills as they work together to create their response papers and practice their follow-up answers. Because they have no advance knowledge of the questions in the latter part of the competition, students must demonstrate critical thinking skills with a thorough understanding of their topic, instead of merely learning to recite information.

Teachers have responded enthusiastically to what promises to be a new and dynamic way to engage today's youth, tomorrow's citizens. Upon statewide implementation, the *We the People of Alaska* program will be scalable in terms of how competitions are conducted.

2013 We The People of Alaska Student Competition

The Institute of the North's competition for Alaska Studies students, "We the People of Alaska" (WTPA), has been developed to:

- Help high-school students better understand Alaska issues of historic and current significance;
- Encourage high school students to explore their individual and civic rights and responsibilities;
- Provide Alaska Studies teachers and students a unique tool for studying key Alaska questions;
- Challenge students to strengthen their collaborative and analytical skills; and
- Deliver to Alaska Studies classes an additional mechanism for student evaluation.

Competition Guidelines

As a fundamentally different approach to Alaska Studies classes, this competition is an opportunity to highlight students' knowledge of Alaska issues and encourage youth to reflect on their roles as civically engaged citizens. The Competition's starting premise is that today's youth are tomorrow's leaders.

The WTPA Competition is a statewide contest open to all Alaska Studies students. The semi-finals consist of students sending in a video of their mock Legislative hearing responses to one of the three topic questions. The top six teams from the semi-final round will compete in Anchorage in the finals round on May 11, 2013. Teachers should encourage teams of 3-4 students to develop over the course of the semester a position paper (essay), and create a video presentation on the content. Presentations will be conducted by students as if they were mock legislative hearings and submitted via video to be reviewed by a panel of subject matter experts (competition judges). Awards include a recognition luncheon immediately following the finals round, whereby students will meet with top Alaskan leaders and receive awards for the top three teams (highest score per unit) and the top team overall.

Presentations will respond to one of three questions for 2013 (complete questions provided online):

- **Question One: Citizenship** - Section 1.1 of the Alaska State Constitution asserts, "all persons have corresponding obligations to the people and to the State." What are these obligations?
- **Question Two: Natural Resources** - The passage of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) came after a large national debate over the importance of development versus conservation. How should a balance between the two be determined?
- **Question Three: Alaska Natives** - What is the importance of the subsistence lifestyle to rural Alaska?

Throughout the semester the Institute of the North will host topic discussions (optional) to give students access to topic experts comprised of lawyers, judges, educators, political figures, community leaders, and agency officials. These sessions will provide students and teachers a chance to ask questions related to their question, as well as connect with valuable resources for Alaska Studies classrooms.

Based on classroom and outside research, teams will make a video of their presentation that they will then e-mail (or mail) to the Institute of the North's designated online forum. The essay should accompany video submission.

The video should be 5-7 minutes long and may include the student's reading their essay or presenting their essay from memory.

A panel of judges will review the videos and chose the top six teams to participate in the finals round in Anchorage. The top six videos will also be available for public viewing online where students with the best video presentations will compete for recognition by a wide variety of viewers.

Information

For more information contact:

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Important Dates

Online Registration Deadline:

Monday, March 11, 2013

Semi-Finals Video

Submission Deadline:

Friday, April 12, 2013

Semi-final winners announced:

Friday, April 19, 2013

Top 6 Teams Compete in Finals:

Saturday, May 11, 2013