

SCOMM

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Pouch V
JUNEAU ALASKA
99811

Alaska State Legislature
House

SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

(907) 465-4951
or
(907) 465-3729

One hearing by SCOPE
Stayed in House HESS
for action (was hold
over from previous
session).



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SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

February 3, 1976

(907) 465-4951
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MINUTES

Present: Parr Davis
Hackney Osterback
Ostrosky Swanson

Absent: Wallis Sullivan
Beirne

Testifying: Marshall Lind, Commissioner of Education; SB 203 am
and HB 245
Ernest Polley, Coordinator, Planning and Research;
HB 245

Robert Van Houte, NEA-Alaska, Inc.; SB 203 am

Chairman Parr called the meeting to order at 3:10 pm.

SB 203 am - Relating to school attendance-Hohman

Parr-Hohman's reason for initiating the bill was because there was a problem with some of the school boards in approving an absence requested for participating in an educational experience.

Lind-Section 14,30.010 (Compiled School Laws) is being amended to add a ninth exemption from compulsory school. Department of Education offered no specific recommendation because they are reluctant to make statutory changes if existing sections cover the problem.

The Committee was unsure of the specific intent of the bill (for short absences, extended absences, etc.) and felt the language needed clarification. It appeared the bill was attempting to put into statute a decision which now exists in school board policy; it should remain the prerogative of the school board to decide if a trip is worthwhile to a student, educationally, and to excuse or not excuse the absence.

Mr. Lind-decision to excuse now rests with superintendent. If a school board overrides his decision he can follow a procedure to grieve the override decision. Felt the major obligation is that a decision not be contradictory to existing statute or law. Requests of this type are few.

VanHoute-would support the bill on the grounds that an absence of this type should be allowed but if it is allowable now under existing law would agree that the bill is not necessary.

Mr Lind -felt most teachers and administrators would agree that an educational experience is another way of learning. Felt it would be difficult for the Department of Education to determine whether the absence was excusable, not being familiar with the student, his grades, etc.

Rep. Swanson made a motion, asking for unanimous consent, that the bill be laid on the table. So ordered.

HB 245-Evaluation & planning in the Department of Education-HESS

Mr.Lind -will be a videotape available in a week having to do with the satellite effort being planned as well as other phases of the proposed program. An assessment program is being worked on in the critical areas of math and reading which will also serve as an assist to the teachers in diagnosing problems in specific areas. Are also looking at high school graduation requirements and evaluating results being achieved with students. The study would assist the Department of Education in tying together efforts (collection of data, managing this information, planning and design work, and evaluation). Would require new money or a provision from the legislature enabling the Department to take it out of another area (Student Instruction Support program). Program would allow standards to be set and districts would be evaluated against these standards. Would be a way of planning on a statewide basis not possible through local school districts.

Polley-existing standardized tests do not allow teachers to derive any conclusion (merely separates people on a curve) but Criterion Reference testing would tell what specific skills are necessary to achieve the intended result, where specifically the student is lacking, and would provide prescriptive support for corrective action.

Rep. Parr-didn't Right to Read project do this?

Polley-program was much to vulnerable; depended too much on the individual skills of the teacher. Program would include the necessary support system (materials and instructions to teachers, etc.). Can only provide this assistance; districts would decide if they should use it. Felt it would be beneficial to discuss the program with superintendents when they are in Juneau next week to get their views.

Rep. Swanson-it would add to the bureaucracy, instead of doing what Chapter 124 intended; to have the Regional Education Attendance Area Board Members make the decisions on standards and then do what has to be done to meet them.

Polley-outlined the technological communications proposed. Said they felt the methods would be faster and more dependable (than mail service) and would cut down on much of the paper work now required resulting in lower expenses. Also much can be accomplished through computer based instruction, one way and two way audio, tapping into satellites, etc. which can not otherwise be offered. A pilot program is the only way to see if these methods will work.

Rep. Hackney-opposed the cost of the study over the period of time proposed. Asked why they couldn't have the pilot program where hardware now exists.

Polley-explained why they had selected the villages they had for the pilot program; low cost and an area where the need is great, for meaningful evaluation (Skagway, Angoon & Kake).

Mr.Lind -not imposing something new or creating an additional layer of bureaucracy on the school districts and not adding new people to the Department of Education, but instead an attempt of looking for better ways to use the funds now allocated for education and to better utilize the dollars going into the hardware (earth station and satellite) regardless of what is done in education. Will get better return on money being put out now. Individual districts can not accomplish the same because of lack of funds, etc. Students in larger communities have an advantage over smaller villages; would help equalize educational capabilities. The proposed program is a vehicle to enable the Department and the Legislature to do planning and evaluating on those things they feel are significant.

Rep. Osterback- supports program because of what it can do in the villages (thru telecommunications, etc.) to bring in new material on a regular basis.

The Committee agreed they should view the videotape the Department of Education had put together with the Telecommunications Office and should talk with the superintendents to get their views on the bill.

Mr.Lind-asked the Committee to ask the superintendents their views on SB 203 am as well.

There being no objection, HB 245 was ordered held in abeyance until a later date.

Chairman Parr adjourned the meeting at 4:30 pm.

Introduced: 3/3/75
Referred: Health, Education &
Social Services and Finance

1 IN THE HOUSE

BY THE HEALTH, EDUCATION AND
SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

2 HOUSE BILL NO. 245

3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4 NINTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

5 A BILL

6 For an Act entitled: "An Act relating to evaluation and planning in the
7 Department of Education."

8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

9 * Section 1. AS 14.07 is amended by adding a new section to read:

10 Sec. 14.07.025. EVALUATION AND PLANNING. The department shall
11 conduct studies to evaluate the quality of education available in the
12 public schools and to plan methods for the improvement of public school
13 education in the state. One-fourth of one per cent of the annual budget
14 of the department shall be used to conduct the studies, and the commis-
15 sioner shall annually report the results of the studies to the legisla-
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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

AGENCY COMMENTS

HB 245

BACKGROUND

Under AS 14.07.020, Duties of the Department of Education, the Department is directed to "study the conditions and needs of the public schools of the state and adopt or recommend plans for the improvement of education". However, until the advent of significant federal funding for state departments of education in the late 1960's, the Department had no internal planning and research capabilities through which it could fulfill this duty.

In the early years of the Research and Planning Section of the Department, funding for personnel and auxiliary services directed toward research and planning activities was totally supplied from federal sources. As late as Fiscal Year 1972, the budget of the section, which totalled \$302.4, was primarily federally-funded, with only \$23.4 of the total supplied from state funds.

Since FY 72, the state's share of the resources allocated to educational planning and research has steadily increased, until, in the FY 75 budget of \$352,200, total, \$208,960 is general fund. Of the general fund contribution, however, \$200,000 was earmarked for a special research and planning project in statewide student skill level assessment.

DISCUSSION

Over the past five years, several movements on both the national and state level have had considerable impact on the direction of the Department of Education. The nationwide thrust for educational accountability -- that is, accountability by professional educators for the results of educational programs -- puts tremendous pressure on the state departments of education both to describe the present status of their educational programs, and to develop plans to move education from where it is to where it should be, in terms of results. The Department's student assessment program addresses the first need, that is, the need to get an accurate description, in terms of student achievement, of the present educational program. The second charge, to design educational programs which achieve or approximate the results desired by the state for its citizens, has not yet been fully addressed in Alaska. Nor will significant steps be taken to improve educational programs until the planning and development functions are recognized and sufficient resources allocated to such functions.

Statewide, the creation of the new rural districts, expanded secondary programs, continuing education for adults, and educational uses of an operational satellite system are areas which require careful analysis and planning if the solutions to

these problems are to be more successful than present practice. Again, within the limits of the present DOE budget for research and planning, such planning and analysis cannot occur on an organized and effective basis.

The strategy outlined in HB 245 appears a reasonable approach to the problem of inadequate resources. It follows a commonly accepted practice in private industry, that of expending a stable percentage of the agency's total operating resources on research, planning and development functions directed toward product improvement.

ACTIVITYESTIMATED COST

1. Data

Work would commence immediately on the design and implementation of a basic minimal data support system to be used for management and instruction.

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| a. Design and pilot the initial software for the date-processing of state and district reporting. | \$ 55,000 |
| b. Establish a technological communication link between the Department and 3 small districts. Prepare a carefully designed research project on the cost-benefits of computer based instruction | \$ 86,000 |

2. Planning and Design

Under the description of Statewide Instructional Support Systems (SISS) there are various sub-systems requiring careful and thorough design. It is felt that it is critically important to insure that the sub-systems are integrated in cost-conscious and mutually supportive manner.

The major sub-systems requiring extensive design work are:

- | | |
|--|-------------|
| (a. Student Assessment * | \$ 180,000) |
| b. Regional Resource Centers | 40,000 |
| c. Satellite Telecommunications and educational technology | 200,000 |
| d. Staff training and evaluation (through the staff development center). | 15,000 |

3. Evaluation

Funds will be used to disseminate information and train district staff on state guidelines for the evaluation of educational programs

25,000

* The funds for student assessment are appropriated as a separate identifiable program.

4. Research and Reporting

On the basis of existent requests, funds are urgently needed for the gathering and analysis of information and the subsequent technical and informational reporting of same

\$ 37,000

Total 458.000

RECOMMENDATIONS

The agency recommends that HB 245 be passed as submitted, with the planning and development monies authorized being placed in the budget of the Office of the Commissioner and with reports on planning, research and development activities within the Department made annually to the Legislature.

Name: Ernest Polley

Title: Coordinator

Date: 3/3/76

THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
FISCAL NOTE

REVISED

Second Session - Ninth Legislature

I. REQUEST

Bill No. H.B. #245
 Title: "Relating to evaluation & planning in DOE"
 Requested by: House Pass Date: 1/30/76
 Return Date Requested: ASAP
 Agency: Education Program: Pre-elementary & Secondary Ed.

II. FISCAL DETAIL

Budget Request Unit(s) Affected: Executive Administration

A. EXPENDITURES: (Thousands of dollars)

OBJECT	FY 76	FY 77	FY 78	FY 79	FY 80	FY 81
100 PERSONAL SERVICES						
200 TRAVEL						
300 CONTRACTUAL		434.0	477.4	525.1	577.6	635.4
400 COMMODITIES						
500 EQUIPMENT						
600 LAND & STRUCTURES						
700 GRANTS, CLAIMS, ETC.						
TOTAL						

B. FUNDING: (Thousands of dollars)

GENERAL FUND		434.0	477.4	525.1	577.6	635.4
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER						

C. POSITIONS:

PERMANENT/TEMPORARY	/	/	/	/	/	/
MAN MONTHS (P./T.)	/	/	/	/	/	/

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

- (a) FY 77 DOE budget $\$245,617.2 \times .025 = \614.0
 (b) Less student assessment 180.0 (already included in DOE Executive Administration BRU).
 $\$614.0 - 180.0 = \434.0
- Assume 100% growth in DOE budget in succeeding years.
- Assumption: That the program evaluation would be conducted on individual program basis which are short term in nature, thus not requiring additional personnel in the DOE. Existing personnel would coordinate and conduct long-range planning.

300 Contractual Services
 380 Professional Services 434.0

IV. ATTACHMENTS

V. DATE: 2/3/74 PREPARED BY: William D. Thomas

Original: Legislative Finance
 cc: Budget and Management
 Prime Sponsor (First Legislator Named)

SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

HB 245

Could you explain what kind of "technological communication link between the Department and three small districts" is proposed (computers, T.V., radio, etc.)?

What are some of the specifics of the student assessment?
Will they be a uniform test such as Iowa Basics, a student questionnaire, or etc?

In column C, Part 2, there is \$200,000 allocated for satellite telecommunications and educational technology. What kind of "extensive design work" do you have planned?