

ALASKA LEGISLATURE SPECIAL COMMITTEE / SUBJECT FILE 8672
1774.3 SCOMM 71: SEN. SPEC. COMM. / JNT. COMM. SCHOOL PERFORMANCE 1988-90

Table 2

Question: What are the most important issues facing the education of American Indians in your state? Again, rank the issues from the most important to the 15th most important.

	Number	%
Lack of funding	31	54.4
Curriculum issues	13	22.8
Parent/family involvement	11	19.3
Recruitment/retention/advisement/counseling	10	17.5
Lack of Indian administrators/educators	9	15.8
Financial Aid for college/university students	8	14.0
Drugs/substance abuse	7	12.3
Quality of instruction	7	12.3
Non-Indians' understanding of Indians/cooperation	6	10.5
Academic achievement	6	10.5
Drop-outs/leaving school	5	8.8
Teacher preparation/training	5	8.8
Apathy by the Indian community	5	8.8
More Indian graduates	5	8.8
Jurisdictional/self-determination/sovereignty	4	7.0
Lack of leadership	4	7.0
Student achievement	4	7.0

N = 57

Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll question: What do you think are the biggest problems with the public schools in this (your) community must deal?

	National Totals %
Use of drugs	30
Lack of discipline	22
Lack of proper financial support	14
Difficulty in getting good teachers	9
Poor curriculum/poor standards	8
Large schools/overcrowding	8
Moral standards	7
Parents' lack of interest	6
Pupils' lack of interest/truancy	6
Drinking/alcoholism	6
Teachers' lack of interest	5
Low teacher pay	5
Lack of respect for teacher/other students	4
Integration/busing	4

Perceived Improvement of American Indian Education

Table 3

Question: Would you say that the education of American Indians, from a national point of view, has improved, gotten worse, or stayed the same during the past five years?

	Total %
Improved	35.1
Gotten Worse	33.3
Stayed the Same	28.1
Don't Know	3.5
N = 57	100.0

Question: Would you say that the education of American Indians, from a state point of view, has improved, gotten worse, or stayed the same during the past five years?

Table 4

	Total %
Improved	35.1
Gotten Worse	22.8
Stayed the Same	36.8
Don't Know	5.3
N = 55	100.0

Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll question: Would you say that the public schools in this community have improved from, say, five years ago, gotten worse, or stayed about the same?

National Totals %

Improved	25
Gotten Worse	22
Stayed about the same	36
Don't Know	17

Perceptions about Education Reform and Standards

Question: Some people say that raising achievement standards will encourage American Indian students to do better in school. Others say that raising the standards will put American Indian students at such a disadvantage that they will become discouraged about school or will drop out. Do you think that raising achievement standards will encourage American Indian students to do better in school, or will it cause them to become discouraged or drop out? Comment on your response.

Table 5

Total %	
Yes, Encourage	57.1
No, Discourage	18.4
Don't Know	24.5
N = 49	100.0

Phi Delta Kappan/Gallup Poll question: Some people say that raising achievement standards will encourage students from low-income backgrounds to do better in school. Others say that raising the standards will put these students at such a disadvantage that they will become discouraged about school or will even drop out. Do you think that raising achievement standards will encourage students from poor backgrounds to do better in school or will it cause them to become discouraged or to drop out?

National Totals %

Yes, Encourage	52
No, Discourage	30
Don't Know	18
	100

Question: During the last five years there has been a lot of concern about the condition of education in the United States. There have been numerous reform reports that have identified concerns and presented recommendations. What impact has this national reform movement had on the education of American Indians?

Table 6

	Total %
No Impact	14.3
Little Impact	30.4
Some Impact	33.9
Significant Impact	14.3
Don't Know	7.1
N = 56	100.0

Table 7

Question: How has Indian Education fared under the Reagan Administration?

	Total %
Poorly	70.2
Fair	14.0
No Change	12.3
Good	3.5
Very Good	0.0
N = 5	100.0

Table 8

Question: What should be the focus of Indian Education programs?
Comment on your response.

Academic	7.0
Cultural and Language	0.0
Both Academic and Culture and Language	93.0
N = 57	100.0

Comments: There were a total of 37 comments. Eight of the comments mentioned only "academics" as a focus of Indian Education programs. The rest of the comments related indicated both academic and culture and language should be a focus. Five mentioned the curriculum as a way to integrate culture and language into the academics; five also mentioned that a culture and language focus was important in the development of self-concept, which in turn was related to academics.

BIA Education

Table 9

Question: Should the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) turn over its education function to the tribes and states? Comment on your response.

No	50.0
Yes	50.0
N = 46	100.0

Comments: There were 53 separate comments to this question. In general, 28 respondents said "yes" to having the BIA turn over its education function to tribes, and 12 said "no" to states. However, tied to the "yes" answer were statements that the "tribes must decide," "if the tribes are interested," "after planning by the tribes" or if "tribes have quality staff and boards." Only four respondents indicated the "tribes were not ready" to take over. Seven respondents mentioned that education is a trust responsibility and the Federal Government/BIA must be held accountable for the education of American Indians.

Title IV - Indian Education Act

Table 10

Question: In 1972 the Indian Education Act (Title IV) was passed. What is your overall assessment of Title IV since 1972? Comment on your response.

	Total %
Very Good	22.6
Good	49.1
Fair	22.6
Poor	5.7
Very Poor	0.0
N = 53	100.0

Comments: Forty-three comments were made. Nine concerned the lack of funding for Title IV programs; six indicated Title IV provided opportunity for more parental involvement; four mentioned Title IV helped state departments, schools, and tribes to focus on the education of American Indians; four respondents stated that Title IV was poorly administered at the national level; and four mentioned Title IV provided educational opportunities for Indian students. The rest of the comments covered a wide variety of topics.

Question: What changes would you like to see in Title IV? Be specific.

Comments: Forty-nine suggestions were given. More money or increased funding for Title IV programs was mentioned more (14 times) than anything else. Eight comments dealt with Title IV eligibility requirements, including the 506 form. Six concerned strengthening parental involvement and five suggested the improvement of program accountability, including evaluation. Three comments suggested Title IV place more emphasis on research and three felt there needs to be a better national assessment of Title IV.

Perceptions about Bilingual Education

Table 11

Question: Do you support bilingual education for American Indian students?

	Total %
No	3.6
Yes	96.4
N = 56	100.0

Table 12

Question: In general, what approach to bilingual education is most effective with American Indians?

	Total %
BLE Transitional	38.9
Maintenance	33.3
ESL	11.1
Other	16.7
N = 36	100.0

Comments: Of the 17 comments offered, four indicated the bilingual approach depends on the local community or area. Four also said they did not know or understand the difference in the approaches.

Perceptions about Research in Indian Education

Table 13

Question: Is there a need to do more research in the education of American Indian students?

	Total %
No	7.3
Yes	92.7
N = 55	100.0

Comments: Respondents were asked to suggest research topics and questions. Among the 48 suggested and the number of times they were mentioned were: Drop-outs (8), relationship between cultural factors and academic achievement (7), learning styles (6), bilingual education (5), teaching styles (4), factors of successful students (4), testing (3), and career education (3).

Question: Do you know of any meaningful research being conducted right now?

Table 14

	Total %
No	78.2
Yes	21.8
N = 55	100.0

Comments: Only 12 comments were made when asked to identify meaningful research being conducted right now. Studies on successful Indian students, bilingual education, student retention, and an adult literacy assessment were specifically mentioned. Other comments were general in nature, some citing sources of research, i.e. ERIC and the Bilingual Clearinghouse.

Teaching

Question: One concern questions the preparation of teachers by colleges and universities. What do you think teachers should know to be effective teachers of American Indian students?

Comments: Fifty-seven individuals commented. The largest number of respondents (28) mentioned that teachers should be knowledgeable about the culture and values of their Indian students. Thirteen (13) mentioned that effective teachers should know about the history, including tribal histories, of their students. Eight (8) comments referred to student "learning styles" as something teachers should know. Six (6) suggested that teachers need to take courses that deal with working with and teaching culturally different people; multicultural and human relation courses were mentioned. Five (5) comments suggested that teachers need to know about the Indian community and ways to get parents involved. Other comments were mentioned, but with less frequency and are not presented here.

Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc.

TESTIMONY

by

the Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc.

August 26, 1988

Public Hearing for Quality Education for Minorities Project and
the Alaska Senate Special Committee on School Performance.

Good evening, my name is Jeanine Kennedy, and I work as the Executive Director for the Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc. This organization is also known as Rural CAP.

Ladies and gentlemen, we appreciate this opportunity to provide input into this process and want to thank you for that.

I will begin by identifying myself, then, the organization for which I work, next I will pass onto you information Rural CAP has received from rural Alaskans regarding their concerns about the educational system, and I will end with a couple of recommendations.

I am Vuntut Gwich'in Athabascan and was born, raised and educated in Fairbanks. I was graduated from the University of Alaska in Fairbanks where I majored in History and Political Science.

Rural CAP is a statewide social action agency whose central offices are located in Anchorage. Our constituents are the people who live in the villages in rural Alaska and it is from this perspective that I will speak. One-third of Rural CAP's 21-member board is comprised of village people and it is from them that we receive guidance about the issues affecting rural Alaskans. We encourage the efforts of villagers to gain control of the changes affecting their lives. We do this by providing information, assisting with the delivery of technical skills and direct services, advocating, and by strengthening rural people's ability to advocate for themselves. Rural CAP's philosophy is based on the belief that rural Alaskans are capable of identifying problems and executing solutions to those problems. Rural CAP's role often is simply to provide the opportunity for people to gather and talk, to facilitate the access of rural Alaskans to accurate, timely information that they may have the essentials to make informed decisions. We do not presume to know what rural Alaskans "need to know" -- they tell us. Empowerment is knowing that people are perfectly intelligent, but have been denied the opportunity to participate in the solution of their own problems because of the rigidity of structures and systems or because of conditions beyond their control which limits their ability to participate.

RurAL CAP annually conducts a forum called the Village Participation Conference in Juneau. We provide the space and time for villagers from across the state to get together, talk about their concerns, and work on solutions. We invite legislators, governmental agency people -- I know that we have invited the Dept of Education and that this department has attended many times. The purpose of inviting policy and decision makers to this conference, is for those people to have the opportunity to listen to what the villagers deem important, to hear what villagers recognize as problems, and for decision and policy makers to let rural people know what resources are available.

From last year's VPC I wish at this time to pass on to you what rural Alaskans have said are their concerns with education for Native people in rural Alaska:

- 1) "Villagers get the worst teachers -- sometimes we feel like we just get the rejects from the lower 48 -- people get jobs teaching in rural Alaska who couldn't get jobs anywhere else."
- 2) "We have advisory boards, but no power. What we recommend doesn't make any difference. We are just told we can't do that because of this rule or that rule. We can't fire a teacher who isn't any good or has no understanding of our culture and who refuses to accommodate it. We are told tenure is most important -- not the education of our children. Maybe education could be better and cheaper if we didn't have to pay poor (or deficient) teachers so much."
- 3) "Kids need to learn how to give public presentations and speeches. Should learn this in the school system. Need a specific curriculum for this to be taught by elders."
- 4) "There is no excuse for kids being graduated out of school who can't read. Because the kids have to go to school, they miss out on learning hunting and trapping. They don't learn in school. So these kids miss double: they don't have the opportunity to learn how to survive in their culture or in the Western culture."
- 5) "Home Economics" and Physical Education curriculum needs to include information about alcoholism."
- 6) "Need to teach people how to write proposals."
- 7) "Title 29 does not allow communities to interfere."
- 8) "Cross-cultural training should be required for certification. We get teachers who have no idea about our culture and yet our own people can't get the teaching jobs."
- 9) "We do not have real local control."
- 10) "No tools or evaluation system for villages to use to exercise control or authority in regard to education, nothing village can do about it."

- 11) "Tenure law needs to be examined."
- 12) "Natives can't get jobs as teachers."
- 13) "When village tries to do something, it is accused of interfering. No way to influence/evaluate teachers or the system."
- 14) "Teachers are organizing into strong political groups to fight with parents. We need to unify to fight back."
- 15) "Idea: Put education system out to bid; give contract to best bidder."
- 16) "Villages need to have the authority to do performance evaluations that would be used by the State. Need legislation to authorize such a system."

This is just a sampling of the comments. Many of them repeated over and over in different ways. When one listens to what villagers have to say about education in their communities, you can hear these three themes being repeated often:

A) CURRICULUM The curriculum is not relevant to village life. There are skills and knowledge they feel would be useful, but what they deem important is not being acknowledged fully enough. Also, they seem to be saying that school needs to be more holistic in its approach -- that everyday life experiences need to be interwoven and used with the teaching of the regular academic curriculum. For instance, the issue of alcoholism is relevant and significant in the villages. They ask how can education about that be combined with education in home economics and physical education.

B) LOCAL CONTROL/PARTICIPATION - Villagers want to have more local control and say about what goes on in their schools. They appear to feel they are discounted, not listened to, ignored and just plain over-ridden. Frankly, I thought some of their ideas were fantastic. They would make the systems and structures stretch. They challenge the way things are, but if one considers that what is happening right now is not working and costs a lot, what is the harm in changing rules, laws, and structures? Certainly if rules, laws and structures are made by men and women, they can be changed by same.

C) MORE EMPHASIS ON CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE - I heard from the people that the cultures have a lot to offer, but that this information is not being incorporated into the school system and is not being acknowledged as important. There needs to be more emphasis on knowledge that supports the values of the ~~Western~~ *Native* cultures. Just because someone has a degree in education does not necessarily make that person a good teacher. Frankly, I know women whom I can go to in the village and talk to for hours for free and come away feeling psychically healed yet they have no master's degrees in psychotherapy. The only difference is that they don't have a piece of paper which enables them to

charge \$90/hour.

The important recommendations come from the people. These are the community leaders who are concerned, are available and want to work on the problem. It is their problem and they have the greatest concern and investment -- their children. I would ask you to listen to what they recommended:

These recommendations were written and formulated by village leaders from around the state at the 1988 Village Participation Conference:

VILLAGE RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING EDUCATION

#88-21 "Making Specific Recommendations to the Legislature on Revamping Title 14 - Alaska Statutes on Education"

Title 14 of Alaska State law still grants much of the educational authority to a statewide board and regional boards. Some local participation is encouraged, but most decisions are made regionally or in Juneau. In the cities this means added consistency in educational standards, which is needed when money is divided between many schools. In the villages, however, only one school exists - and while parents are often active in supporting education, they may have very little to say regarding curriculum, teacher hire, and how money is spent. The resolution asks the legislature to look at revamping Title 14 in the light of differences between educational institutions in the cities and the villages.

#88-22 "In Support of Increased Funding for Education"

Due to the state's economic slump, funding for education has suffered in some areas. When the state enjoyed large oil revenues, schools were built which, in some cases, cannot continue to be maintained locally, so the buildings have been shut down. This has meant that, for some small villages, the prospect of sending young children outside of the village for schooling has arisen. This resolution requests funding to reopen any schools that have had to be shut down, so that young children do not have to leave home for school.

#88-23 "In Support of Quality Education in Rural Alaska"

This resolution speaks to the differences in educational standards between urban and rural schools. Urban schools receive funding that enables them to maintain high educational standards. This is possible because of the large student population which requires, for example, specialized teaching in subject areas such as computer use, physical education and the sciences. Teachers in rural areas, however, must cope with

cultural difference and their students have to cope with teachers who may not be knowledgeable of local customs, traditions and culture. This resolution asks that traditional Native knowledge be incorporated into current school curricula to promote understanding between villagers and those who come up North to educate them.

#88-24 "In Support of HB 399"

This resolution speaks to the problem of racial discrimination in the hiring of school teachers. HB 399 would ban discrimination in the hiring of school teachers, and this resolution supports that legislation.

OBSERVATIONS AND COMMENTS

A point to consider is that we have high educational requirements for teachers. If it is remembered why we have these requirements it is to insure that people are qualified to teach. The intent was to provide better education. That system as a solution doesn't appear to have the positive results intended.

There comes a time when we have to look at the rules and the regulations we have established and make a determination about whether or not they are serving us or hindering us. Are the rules we have established, the statutes, really insuring the results we want? We all know that despite the requirements of vast credentials some real mistakes have been made. What is the harm in letting the communities choose their own teachers and to take a more active role in determining what kids need to learn. Perhaps, a focus of the Department of Education could be to find ways that they could support villages to have more control over their educational systems within the villages.

One other comment I wish to make is that this education problem is complex. If a child is living in a household where alcohol is being abused, parents are fighting all night, the child him/herself is being sexually or physically abused or neglected (has been up all night and had no breakfast for example) these emotional traumas on a daily basis make it very difficult for one to do well in school. There is too much on the young mind to concentrate. You can appoint the best teachers in the whole world, but if the child has all these extra burdens it is difficult. If the community is drowning in alcohol, it cannot save itself. A rope must be thrown out to the drowning person. We have a responsibility as human beings to attempt to assist drowning persons if we have rope or if we know how to swim, especially the children, I would imagine. There are not many communities in rural Alaska where alcohol is not a severe problem. Perhaps, a function of the school could be to focus its education on the young to help them recognize

that they (the youngster) do have within themselves the power to survive and to help them to develop some positive life-preserving coping skills and knowledge of self-worth. Failing in school only adds to the problem.

Head Start is a wonderful model and gets results because it treats the whole child: health, mental health, family, nutrition and education. Put another way it serves the mind, the emotions, the physical body, and when we add the cultural aspect because the program is run by the family, it is spiritual. In our villages the whole emphasis on education may need to be intertwined from a more holistic approach and changed drastically.

I will conclude my remarks by stating I think it is important to include the people in the process. For instance, it may be helpful to have among your ranks, as panelists and listeners, more people from the villages who are interested in education. It also would be helpful to go directly to the villagers and ask them. It must be recognized that these organizations, agencies, and "spokes people" for the Native community that are in the cities may have interest, jobs or whatever which could influence them to believe that they "know" or understand what the village perspective is. I believe that the most accurate information you can get is directly from the students and the parents.

This concludes my testimony. Thank you for this opportunity.

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ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION - PUBLIC HEARING

"TOWARD MORE EFFECTIVE ALASKAN MINORITY EDUCATION"

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AUGUST 26-27, 1988

By Leona Okakok

North Slope Borough Board of Education

Introduction

Members of the Senate Special Committee and visiting officials from MIT and the Carnegie Foundation, thank you for this opportunity to testify.

As a School Board Member, improving Alaska Native education is a vital concern to me. Today, too many Native young people do not complete high school, and many of those who do graduate are at the lower end of the academic scale. At the same time, the traditions of Native culture have weakened among many of our young people as they try hard to adopt Western ways.

Therefore, my concerns are two-fold:

1. Alaska Native students must be better prepared to live and work

in Western society.

2. Alaska Native traditions must be reinforced so our students will not lose their own rich cultural heritage.

In other words, our students must become successful in living and working in both cultures. *In effect we are requiring all of our kids to graduate with a double major, as it were.*

From a School Board Member's perspective, I believe we have made many improvements in Alaska Native education in the North Slope Borough School District. Some of these include:

- st* 1. ~~We have committed~~ *ing* the District to Competency Based Education to improve basic skills.
- st* 2. ~~We have pioneered~~ *ing* an Early Childhood Education (ECE) program for three year olds.
- st* 3. ~~We have provided~~ *ing* Inupiaq language instructors in the classroom.

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4. We have assigned additional counselors and teacher aides to provide more individual attention to students. - including post-secondary
5. We have implemented a more comprehensive vocational education program.
6. We are exploring the need for alternative schooling and other programs for at-risk students.

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We feel these efforts offer great promise for increasing Alaska Native student achievement. My suggestions for further improvement focus on the State taking a greater leadership role in promoting such programs.

Two things are needed:

1. First, the State Department of Education should help school districts develop and implement programs that improve minority student performance. This leadership should include detailed information about organization, staffing, procedures, curriculum and materials. The Department should also provide ongoing staff assistance as districts develop these programs.
2. Second, the State should take the lead in funding programs that contribute to greater minority student success. For example, it is not well known that the North Slope Borough locally provides 56% of the School District budget in order to make many of our programs possible. In view of the basic responsibility for education stated in the Alaska Constitution, I believe the State should provide at least half or more of every school district's budget as a minimum.

Conclusion

In the past few minutes, I have tried to provide a brief description of the special programs we have adopted in the North Slope Borough School District to improve Native student success. We feel we have made a good beginning and now look to the State for increased leadership and funding to make such programs a continuing certainty for us and for other school districts.

Thank you.

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES, INC. TESTIMONY
BEFORE THE QUALITY EDUCATION FOR MINORITIES PROJECT
TOGETHER WITH THE ALASKA SENATE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON
SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

August 26, 1988

GOOD AFTERNOON, MY NAME IS JANIE LEASK AND I'M PRESIDENT OF THE ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES. THE ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES IS A STATEWIDE NATIVE NON-PROFIT ASSOCIATION WHICH SERVES AS AN ADVOCATE ON BEHALF OF ALASKA NATIVE PEOPLE. OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS CONSISTS OF A MEMBER FROM EACH OF THE 13 NATIVE REGIONAL CORPORATIONS, 10 OF THE 12 REGIONAL NON-PROFIT NATIVE ASSOCIATIONS WHO DELIVER HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES TO THEIR RESPECTIVE REGIONS, AND 13 MEMBERS WHO REPRESENT VILLAGE CORPORATIONS AND TRIBES.

AFN HAS LONG BEEN CONCERNED WITH EDUCATION AND HAS SPONSORED A NUMBER OF EDUCATION CONFERENCES OVER THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS. THE P'URPOSE OF MY TESTIMONY HERE TODAY IS TO PROVIDE YOU WITH AN OVERVIEW OF THOSE MEETINGS, THE ISSUES DISCUSSED, AND THE RECOMMENDATIONS AND PRIORITIES WHICH RESULTED.

A STATEWIDE NATIVE EDUCATION SUMMIT MEETING WAS HELD THIS PAST MAY TO DISCUSS WHAT KIND OF EDUCATION WE WANTED TO SEE FOR OUR CHILDREN - WHAT ARE SOME OF THE ISSUES WE'RE CURRENTLY FACING AND HOW WE FEEL EDUCATION CAN BE IMPROVED.

THE MOST DOMINANT OF THE THEMES WHICH RAN THROUGH THE RECENT EDUCATION SUMMIT MEETING WAS THE DESIRE BY NATIVE PEOPLE TO PROVIDE OUR CHILDREN WITH THE "BEST OF BOTH WORLDS" IN EDUCATION. THIS WAS DEFINED BY PARTICIPANTS AS A BASIC EDUCATION THAT IS BOTH ACADEMICALLY STRONG AND RELEVANT TO VILLAGE LIFE. AN EDUCATION WHICH ENABLES STUDENTS TO MAKE CHOICES OF WHICH PATH IN LIFE TO TAKE - SUBSISTENCE LIFESTYLE, COLLEGE, OR VOCATIONAL TRAINING.

TO A LARGE DEGREE MANY OF THE ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS DISCUSSED AT OUR MAY MEETING PARALLELED THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF BOTH THE SEPTEMBER 1984 CONFERENCE AS WELL AS THE MARCH RETREAT - THE NEED TO INTEGRATE NATIVE HISTORY AND CULTURE INTO SCHOOLS, THE IMPORTANCE OF BILINGUAL EDUCATION AS A MEANS TO PROVIDE A BASE FROM WHICH TO LEARN, THE NEED FOR MORE CULTURALLY SENSITIVE TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS, THE NEED FOR MORE NATIVE TEACHERS, THE CRITICAL IMPORTANCE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION, AND THE OVERWHELMING NEED FOR THE DIRECT INVOLVEMENT OF BOTH THE PARENTS AND THE COMMUNITY IN OUR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION.

THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THIS SUMMIT MEETING ARE THE

FOLLOWING:

1. PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRE-KINDERGARTEN, HOME-BASED, EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION THAT FOCUSES ON PARENTING SKILLS AND PRENATAL CARE TO STRENGTHEN ALASKA NATIVE FAMILIES.
2. THE NEED TO DEFINE "BASIC EDUCATION" - WHAT SHOULD BE INCLUDED/REQUIRED FOR GRADUATION; WHAT DO WE EXPECT OUR CHILDREN TO KNOW BEFORE THEY LEAVE OUR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM.
3. ADVOCATE FOR THE PASSAGE OF STATE LEGISLATION WHICH WOULD PROVIDE CERTIFICATION ALTERNATIVES FOR ALASKA NATIVE LANGUAGE AND CULTURE TEACHERS WHICH WOULD PROVIDE THE RECOGNITION AND EQUITY IN THE WAY ALASKA NATIVES WHO TEACH NATIVE CULTURE AND LANGUAGES IN THE CLASSROOM ARE TREATED.
4. THE NEED TO HAVE LANGUAGE AND CULTURE TAUGHT TO BOTH CHILDREN IN THE CLASSROOM AND TO PARENTS AFTER SCHOOL - USING THE SCHOOL FACILITIES.
5. THE CRITICAL NEED TO PLACE SOCIAL COUNSELORS IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS. THIS RECOMMENDATION HAS BEEN MADE TIME AND TIME AGAIN AT ALL OF OUR CONFERENCES. THESE COUNSELORS ARE SORELY NEEDED TO HELP IDENTIFY THOSE STUDENTS WHO ARE "AT RISK" AS WELL AS WORKING WITH THE SCHOOLS AND THE COMMUNITY TO DEVELOP ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE PROGRAMS IN THEIR PARTICULAR SCHOOLS.

6. ASK THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO REVIEW THE EXISTING BILINGUAL LITERATURE AND OUTLINE THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF TEACHING IN THE HOME LANGUAGE. THIS RECOMMENDATION COMES OUT OF THE RECOGNITION THAT HAVING A BASE LANGUAGE IS CRUCIAL TO THE OVERALL LEARNING PROCESS AND SUCCESS THE SOONER YOU CAN ESTABLISH A BASE LANGUAGE FROM WHICH TO LEARN, THE BETTER OFF THAT CHILD WILL BE. MANY OF OUR CHILDREN IN THE VILLAGES ARE STARTING SCHOOL WITHOUT THIS BASE; WITH OFTEN WHAT IS TERMED "VILLAGE ENGLISH" - CONSEQUENTLY THEY ARE HAVING DIFFICULTIES IN THEIR CRITICAL EARLY YEARS.

7. TO ENSURE THAT WHEN OUR CHILDREN GRADUATE, THEY ARE COMPETENT IN A VARIETY OF SKILLS AND INTELLIGENCES IN ORDER FOR THEM TO HAVE ALL THE ADVANTAGES POSSIBLE TO PREPARE THEM FOR THE "BEST OF BOTH WORLDS". (ACCOUNTABILITY)

8. THE ONGOING NEED TO DEVELOP LEADERSHIP SKILLS.

9. IN ORDER TO BETTER MEET THE NEEDS OF ALASKA NATIVE STUDENTS, PARTICIPANTS EMPHASIZED THE NEED FOR SCHOOLS TO BE MORE SENSITIVE TO NATIVE CULTURES. THEY FELT THIS COULD BE ACCOMPLISHED THROUGH THE DEVELOPMENT OF CURRICULUM MATERIALS, ESPECIALLY FOR ALASKA HISTORY, THAT INCLUDE THE PERSPECTIVES AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF ALASKA NATIVES.

10. THE NEED TO REQUIRE LOCAL SCHOOLS TO MEET WITH PARENTS AND THE COMMUNITY TO DEVELOP WRITTEN PLANS TO COOPERATIVELY MEET THE NEEDS OF HIGH RISK STUDENTS.

11. THE NEED TO PREPARE STUDENTS FOR ALTERNATIVE FORMS OF EDUCATION (i.e. VOCATIONAL EDUCATION) - RECOGNIZING THE FACT THAT COLLEGE MAY NOT BE APPROPRIATE FOR EVERYONE AND THAT ONLY 96% OF ALASKA NATIVES FINISH COLLEGE.

WHILE THESE ISSUES ARE DISTINCT TO ALASKA NATIVES, MUCH OF THE DISCUSSION CENTERED ON EDUCATIONAL CONCERNS THAT ARE RELEVANT TO ALL STUDENTS, NOT JUST NATIVE STUDENTS.

THE MARCH RETREAT OF THE NATIVE LEADERSHIP RESULTED IN A NUMBER OF SIMILAR RECOMMENDATIONS. THE RETREAT PARTICIPANTS STATED:

* THAT ALASKA NATIVE HISTORY BE REQUIRED FOR BOTH NATIVE AND NON-NATIVE STUDENTS ALIKE AND THAT THAT INCLUDE THE STUDY OF NATIVE CULTURE, THE ALASKA NATIVE CLAIMS SETTLEMENT ACT (ANCSA) AND THE ISSUES OF 1991.

* THAT THERE NEEDS TO BE MORE QUALIFIED TEACHERS AS WELL AS MORE NATIVE TEACHERS

* THAT THE RURAL EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM PRODUCE DEGREES THAT PREPARE STUDENTS TO WORK AND LIVE IN RURAL ALASKA.

* THAT THERE NEEDS TO BE HIGHER ACADEMIC STANDARDS

* THAT THERE NEEDS TO BE MORE SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE SO THAT OUR STUDENTS WHO WANT TO GO TO COLLEGE HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO DO SO

* THAT COUNSELORS BE PROVIDED IN OUR SCHOOLS

THE PARTICIPANTS ALSO DISCUSSED THE STATEWIDE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT TEST SCORES WHICH WERE PUBLISHED EARLIER THIS YEAR BY THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND WHICH SHOWED THAT THE STUDENTS IN THE VAST MAJORITY OF RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS TESTED BELOW THE NATIONAL AVERAGE IN THE AREAS OF MATH, READING, READING COMPREHENSION, LANGUAGE ARTS, AND PROBLEM SOLVING. IN WANTING TO SEND A VERY STRONG MESSAGE TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND THE LEGISLATURE, THE PARTICIPANTS STATED:

"THE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL OF NATIVE STUDENTS AS IDENTIFIED BY THE STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT REPORT RELEASED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IS UNACCEPTABLE. WE DEMAND MAJOR EFFORT BY THE STATE AND THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION BE UNDERTAKEN TO CORRECT THESE DEFICIENCIES. WE ALSO REQUEST

SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING TO FIND OUT WHY OUR CURRENT EDUCATION SYSTEM IS NOT WORKING."

THE PARTICIPANTS OUTLINED THE FOLLOWING AREAS FOR FUNDING PRIORITIES IN THE LEGISLATURE:

* EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

0-3 YEARS AND THAT THEY BE COMMUNITY-BASED PROGRAMS

3-5 YEARS THROUGH AN EXPANDED HEAD START TYPE PROGRAMS

* SOCIAL COUNSELORS IN K-6 GRADES

* THAT THERE BE MORE NATIVE TEACHERS

* THAT THE CURRICULUM BE IMPROVED TO INCLUDE NATIVE HISTORY AND CULTURE

* THAT NATIVE LANGUAGE AND CULTURE BE A PRIORITY IN OUR SCHOOLS

* AND THAT NATIVE STUDENTS BE GUARANTEED OPPORTUNITIES IN POST-SECONDARY, ACADEMIC, TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL FIELDS

I'D LIKE TO EMPHASIZE A COUPLE OF AREAS IN MY CLOSING COMMENTS: THE ISSUES OF INCREASED EXPECTATIONS, THE NEED

FOR ACCOUNTABILITY, AND THE NEED TO HAVE BOTH THE PARENTS AND THE COMMUNITY INVOLVED IN DECISIONS WHICH AFFECT OUR SCHOOLS.

FIRST OF ALL LET ME TOUCH ON THE NEED FOR INCREASED EXPECTATIONS BY SHARING WITH YOU SOME OF THE POINTS RAISED DURING THE FIRST NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON DROP-OUT PREVENTION WHICH WAS HELD IN MARCH OF THIS YEAR IN NORTH CAROLINA.

MUCH OF THE PRESENTATIONS AT THIS CONFERENCE DEALT WITH THE WAY OUR CHILDREN ARE BEING TREATED IN SCHOOLS . . . MORE AS "RECEPTACLES OF INFORMATION" RATHER THAN AS PEOPLE WITH REAL INDIVIDUAL AND HUMAN NEEDS. THE ISSUE OF HIGHER EXPECTATIONS WAS RAISED TIME AND TIME AGAIN AND THE STATEMENT MADE BY IVAN FITZWATER, A NATIONALLY-KNOWN AND RESPECTED EDUCATOR WHO SAID: "KIDS CAN BECOME ANYTHING WE CONVINCE THEM THEY CAN BE". THIS IS A VERY SIMPLE YET POWERFUL STATEMENT.

WE HAVE A PROBLEM HERE IN ALASKA IN MANY OF OUR SCHOOLS WHERE OUR NATIVE STUDENTS ARE BEING TAUGHT BY PEOPLE WHO FEEL THAT THEY SHOULD SOMEHOW EXPECT LESS OF THEM BECAUSE THEY'RE NATIVE AND THEY WON'T GO ON TO COLLEGE, THEY'LL JUST STAY IN THE VILLAGE, OR THAT THEY'RE SOMEHOW LESS EQUIPPED TO RESPOND TO HIGHER EXPECTATIONS OR TO SUCCEED WITH HIGHER ACADEMIC STANDARDS.

ALASKA NATIVE STUDENTS ARE NOT GENETICALLY ILL-EQUIPPED TO LEARN . . . I FIRMLY BELIEVE IT IS A QUESTION OF RAISING BOTH THE LEVEL OF EXPECTATIONS AS WELL AS THE STANDARDS. AND AS A PART OF THIS, I'M A FIRM BELIEVER IN ACCOUNTABILITY. OUR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM HERE IN ALASKA MUST BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE FOR THE SUCCESS AND/OR FAILURE OF OUR STUDENTS. THE PARTICIPANTS AT OUR SEPTEMBER MEETING DISCUSSED THE LOW ACADEMIC TEST SCORES AND WHILE THEY AGREED SOMETHING MUST BE DONE TO PREVENT THIS SITUATION FROM CONTINUING, THEY ALSO FELT THAT THERE OUGHT TO BE OTHER METHODS OTHER THAN SIMPLE TEST SCORES FROM WHICH TO MEASURE THE PROGRESS OF OUR STUDENTS.

IF YOU EXPECT MORE OUT OF YOUR STUDENTS AND IF YOU TREAT THEM WITH RESPECT AND CARE . . . I CAN'T HELP BUT FEEL YOU'LL GET MORE OUT OF THEM . . . IT'S A FACT . . . IT'S BEEN PROVEN TIME AND TIME AGAIN. AND TO WORK ON GETTING BETTER RESULTS OUT OF OUR CHILDREN, WE HAVE TO TURN OUR ATTENTION TO OUR FAMILIES, OUR COMMUNITY, AND OUR TEACHERS BECAUSE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF OUR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION RESTS NOT SOLELY WITH THE TEACHERS OR OUR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM. WE AS PARENTS MUST BEAR A LARGE SHARE OF THE LOAD.

IF WE WANT BETTER TEACHERS, MORE NATIVE TEACHERS, MORE SOCIAL COUNSELORS IN OUR SCHOOLS, HIGHER STANDARDS, RAISED EXPECTATIONS AND GREATER ACCOUNTABILITY - WE HAVE TO WORK FOR IT, IT HAS TO BECOME A PRIORITY FOR US. AND SLOWLY, THE FIRE IS SPREADING - NATIVE PARENTS NO LONGER FEEL THEY HAVE TO ACCEPT LESS WHEN IT COMES TO PROVIDING THEIR CHILDREN WITH A GOOD EDUCATION AND TO EQUIP THEM WITH THE TOOLS NECESSARY TO ENSURE THEIR FUTURE SUCCESS. THERE ARE MORE AND MORE EDUCATION CONFERENCES BEING HELD BOTH ON A REGIONAL LEVEL AS WELL AS A STATEWIDE LEVEL. THE PARTICIPANTS AT THESE CONFERENCES ARE VOICING THEIR CONCERNS AND POLICYMAKERS ARE STARTING TO LISTEN. AT THEIR JUNE GOAL-SETTING MEETING, THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION HEARD THE CONCERNS OF THE PARTICIPANTS ATTENDING THE MAY MEETING AND INCORPORATED SOME OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS AND PRIORITIES INTO THEIR GOALS FOR THE UPCOMING YEAR. THE PROCESS HAS BEEN SLOW, BUT AT LONG-LAST WE FEEL AS THOUGH WE'RE BEGINNING TO FINALLY MAKE SOME PROGRESS.

IN CLOSING. I'D LIKE TO THANK YOU FOR HOLDING THIS HEARING - I THINK IT'S IMPORTANT ALASKA NATIVES AND OTHER MINORITIES BE ASKED THEIR OPINION ON WHAT CAN BE DONE TO ENSURE OUR CHILDREN ARE GIVEN EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO SUCCEED IN OUR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM. A GOOD EDUCATION IS ONE OF THE MOST VALUABLE LEGACIES WE CAN PROVIDE.

Data base

1. We know there are problems in edn
- that is why we are here today

The extensive underachievement of Native students is an issue.

What is the problem? Is there really a problem.

Individual researchers can cite data but we do not have a shared perception of the problem. DOE staff members this morning gave dramatic evidence but we do not have a widely ~~shared~~ shared perception of the problem.

2. The problem is framed differently by different people because we do not have a common data base.

3. For a period of time, until mid 1970's DOE published data on drop-outs in the schools. Could have been useful, but the assumptions, the variables, and the definition of "drop-out" was locally decided and ranged from 12-25% except Ktn, (where it was on sch. hd, where it was 2%

4. Test scores - when I hear a district's test scores, I think of Garrison Keillor's description of the people in the community of Lake Wobegone in the radio show *North & South* where all the men are strong, women good looking & all the children are above average.

②
5. When is a student defined as a drop-out?
When I left HK 2 yrs ago that was
locally determined so not necessarily comparable.
How do we assess the progress of students.
We have some rough measures but little
comparability.

6. At the state level, I believe that
a framework for data collection

could be developed program

8. Certain criteria

(a) reasonable data gathering process
- piggy back on already-existing
processes in place in schools

(b) must speak to ~~basic~~ fundamental
concerns: ~~drop-out~~ retention & learning
common error - trivial data collection

should raise
good questions

(c) must be designed to minimize
distortion through conditions added
or by the data gatherers

should be rigorously developed, elegant

(d) ~~it should~~ should be fair to local admin.

9. We will not have a basis for
understanding, comparatively, the
progress of our school districts without
such a data base. Without it
fair accountability will continue to be difficult.

10. If a reliable database were to be developed it would create ~~a threat~~ ^③
~~one possible~~ a situation
which would pose a threat,
sometimes unfairly, to administrators.

The culture of schooling dictates
that ~~we must have competence in our~~
~~administrators~~ ~~and also that our~~
administrators are most susceptible
to pressure. We expect and demand
competence and properly so; however
we are all too inclined to assume a
correlation between student achievement
on the one hand, and administrative
competence on the other. The
~~satisfactory condition~~ in educational
achievement of Alaska Native students
in our schools today is not satisfactory.
In spite of the ^{indisputable} lack of broad database,
there are clear indicators that the achievement
of Native students is not satisfactory. That
condition will not go away magically
because of competent administrators.
Administrators cannot be let off the hook -
they asked for jobs they have, but we need to
be fair too. I like to think they can rise.

~~It is not an~~

to a fair challenge and the challenge becomes clearer & clearer ~~if~~ with a good framework for the development of data with which we can assess where we are. The QEM project, I believe, would serve a useful purpose if it ~~it would~~ assist in ^{re-stimulating the formulation of} formulating a ^{usable} framework for a data base with which we could appraise our movement ^{of progress} in education.

Next I'd like to comment briefly on an issue that has been mentioned several times today and that is parental involvement; community involvement. I will not suggest that it is unimportant because I think it is important, however I want to say that I feel an uneasiness when parental involvement is frequently mentioned, ~~as one of the problems~~ within a group of professionals - especially professional educators - without some elaboration on what the problem is that we are seeing, and the nature of the solution we would hope for when we ~~speak of~~ cite parental involvement as one of the problems. I feel uneasy because an obvious implication is that that problem must be addressed by the parents. Indeed it must, but I feel uneasy because of the subtle implication that we, the professionals are off the hook on that issue. I do not believe we should suggest, ~~that~~ that,

implicitly or explicitly. Alternatively, ^⑥
I would suggest that ~~there is~~
~~professional~~ whenever we are able
to discover a problem in the
educational process, there is also
the potential for a response by
professionals. And if, in regard to the
issue of parental involvement, we
do not take an active role we are
abrogating our responsibility.

What happens if we are not able
to get a child's parents "involved"
parenthetically. With 100,000 children
in ~~Alaska~~ ^{unfortunate} schools that is likely to
be the reality in many cases. Are
we off the hook regarding the quality
of education for a child ~~the~~ whose parents
do not assume our ideal for the
parental role in the education of their
children. If so, those children are
double victims: they are victims of
abrogation by their parents and by
their teachers.

Alternatively, I suggest that (7)
~~it~~ is the responsibility of
professional educators to maximize
the opportunities for children
under the existing conditions, and
if the existing condition includes
uninvolved parents, then we need to
devise ways to respond to that

I do not mean to let parents
off the hook. ~~I believe that~~ I'm
convinced of its value and we
must seek ways to promote it.

I see a role for professional educators
in regard to another aspect of
parental involvement. We need to ask
what can we, in an active, caring,
aggressive, acceptable way, do to
promote parental involvement. We
want parents to come to the schools
but we need to remember that ~~educational~~
~~institutions~~ are not blank, faceless
neutral institutions. We are gatekeepers and
our role in parental involvement needs
be a conscious effort & we must accept the proposition
that the failure to achieve it is a reflection on us
as well as on parents. ~~are we professional?~~ We must have an
active role.

Third I would like to mention the need for more Native personnel throughout the systems.

The fifth of ~~your~~^{the} seven major issues you enumerated in your project summary is the "identification recruitment & preparation of minority teachers" and ~~your~~ the seventh is "public policy regarding minority participation in higher education."

Donald Schon, at MIT, coined the phrase "ideas in good currency". He noted that from time to time someone ~~identifies~~ accurately identifies a relevant problem or issue, ~~or idea~~ and such an idea catches the public's imagination and response is widespread. He also noted that the public usually tires of it before the problem is solved and moves on to other matters which then become "ideas in good currency".

I can remember, after the civil rights ferment of the 1960's when minority hire was an idea in good currency. ~~I know that~~ As a minority person I know that minority hire is still a problem, but I also believe that for the public at large it is ^{no longer} an idea in good currency. A group of cynical conceits have come to the fore to stall progress - - concepts like reverse discrimination, "equal employment opportunity" which in its implementation permits disregard for the existing disparity which resulted from past discrimination, and "available workforce data" which permits employers to pass over qualified minority candidates.

In spite of - not because of - the ed system the no affirmative action grows, but there are ^{too many} horror stories for me even as a skeptic to discuss re Native hire. The U has less ~~affirmative~~ Native claims than it had five years ago.

When I first went to UAF
in

Other issues - no time

What does "success" mean?

Patsy

A N B - working for people
- seeing the "result"



The Educational Enrichment Program

How can rural students in Alaska be encouraged to achieve academically? Faculty at the University of Alaska Southeast, in collaboration with the Tlingit and Haida Central Council, have designed an innovative, intensive summer program to help Alaska Native high school students set and achieve their educational goals. This comprehensive on-campus program benefits high-risk minority youth, students who deserve the best efforts and resources our educational system can offer.

Native Americans have been identified consistently as the most under-represented minority in American colleges and universities. Factors such as geographical isolation and rapid cultural and economic change place Native and rural students in Alaska at even higher risk than their counterparts in the Lower 48. Disproportionate rates of dropout from high school make college an impossibility for many Alaska Native youth. Comparatively low test scores for rural students on standardized state and national measures add to decreased opportunities and low self-concept. This crisis must be addressed in post-secondary institutions as well as public schools if we are to change the dismal statistics on Native college recruitment and retention.

Due to these concerns, the Tlingit and Haida Central Council asked for cooperation from UAS two years ago in planning and offering a special summer program to aid rural Native students in completing high school and making the transition to college. The result of this collaborative effort, called the Educational Enrichment Program, is unique in several ways. Rather than focusing on traditional basic skills through math drills or grammar exercises which are easily forgotten, the faculty designed a curriculum which features higher-level critical thinking abilities. Furthermore, unlike many bridge programs which are geared toward honor students, this program is open only to students who are at risk academically and economically.

The Educational Enrichment Program offers students a three-week residential experience featuring cooperative living in student housing with planned social and cultural activities. The staff is a cooperative team of Native administrators, university faculty, study hall tutors, and live-in counselors. Enrollment is limited to twenty students per session to ensure the individualized attention and one-on-one tutoring which are needed by high-risk students. In the past two years, students from twelve different communities throughout Southeast Alaska have taken part in the program.

Problem solving is stressed in all three daily classes in writing, math reasoning, and psychology. Each course is organized to strengthen students' critical thinking abilities in complementary ways. The writing course emphasizes rhetorical choices in purpose, audience, and voice, culminating in the creation of a text of the students' own writings. In the math course, abstract problems are developed through concrete examples; topics are selected from college-level algebra, topology, logic, and number theory. Goal setting and cooperative learning techniques are the focus of the psychology course, and Native guest speakers help raise cultural awareness and pride among students. University faculty invited by the Tlingit and Haida Central Council to teach in this program have had extensive experience with rural and Native students.

This multifaceted approach to learning creates an environment in which students from isolated villages create a strong peer support network among themselves. A follow-up evaluation for students who have completed the Educational Enrichment Program has been initiated, which will include high school GPA's and test scores collected by a field representative of the Tlingit and Haida Central Council. Preliminary results from this past summer indicate that students not only improve scholastic performance, but also gain more positive attitudes toward themselves and their academic abilities.

Because of its vital link between the University and the local Native organization, this program is respected by parents, school administrators, and the community as one important component of a much-needed comprehensive effort to meet the manifold needs of this special student population. The Educational Enrichment Program has proven itself successful in enhancing the academic potential of rural Alaskan students.

For more information about the Educational Enrichment Program, contact:

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(907) 789-4531

**Educational Enrichment Program
University of Alaska Southeast**

Evaluation Comments from Past Educational Enrichment Program Students:

"The most important thing I learned is that I am an important person."

"Made me learn to appreciate things and get a better attitude and motivation."

"I improved my math skills and discovered that I enjoy writing."

"I learned to open up a little more and made a great bunch of friends."

"All these classes helped me to make up my mind to continue my education and go to college..."

"The tutors stayed cool. They were *always* willing to help."

"I decided I'm going to try harder in school now."

"I know I feel a lot more confident in myself than I used to."

"The knowledge of good study habits is something I can use in the future."

"The counselors treated us like adults--they were terrific!"

"I feel I have learned to understand my feelings better."

"Everything I learned here I intend to use somehow in the future."

"I feel I am going to do a lot better in high school than I did last year."

"Knowledge, skills, and lifetime friendships were the major benefits of the program--a wise investment."

"Now I know what I want to do with my life."

Juneau Empire, Tuesday, August 2, 1988

EDUCATIONAL ENRICHMENT PROGRAM 1988



Enrichment program participants: From left are Cory Mann, Brian Walker, E. Shannon Carle, Rosa Watson, Rudy Walker and Luke Williams. (Juneau students only)

Youths participate in enrichment program

Brian Walker, Rudy Walker, Cory Mann, Rosa Watson, E. Shannon Carle and Luke Williams, all of Juneau, were participants in the Second Annual Education Enrichment Program jointly sponsored by Central Council Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska and the University of Alaska Southeast.

Students participated in an intensive three-week course of study June 12 through July 2 while living on the University of Alaska Southeast campus. The par-

ticipants from Klukwan, Skagway, Hoonah, Juneau, Wrangell, Klawock and Sitka attended classes from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., as well as a required two-hour evening study hall. The academically aggressive courses included writing skills, problem-solving using mathematical logic, and personal development in decision-making, goal-setting, and improved learning strategies.

The intensive week is concluded with a banquet where all participants present a

skit and are recognized for their completion of the program. The banquet recognition held at the end of the program was made possible by a donation from the Sealaska Corp.

To be selected to participate, the students wrote an essay and were recommended by a teacher or counselor as having the potential to benefit. The objective of the program is to positively impact youths so that they will complete high school and begin a successful career path.

POPULATION AT RISK <=> CHILDREN AT RISK

by

Edna Ahgeak MacLean

presented at

Alaska Public Hearing

for

Quality Education for Minorities Project

together with

Alaska Senate Special Committee on School Performance

August 26-27, 1988

Anchorage, Alaska

Population at Risk <=> Children at Risk

Our children are our responsibility. They are dependent on us. We - their parents, families, communities, teachers - are to provide for their well-being, nurture and educate them.

The very fact of the existence of the Senate Special Committee on School Performance and the Quality Education for Minorities Project indicates that something is amiss.

A large number of schools in the United States have failed to provide an educational process whereby most minority students succeed.

More often than not, the onus of the situation is usually focused on the minority students, themselves.

Much of the literature one reads identifies various "deficiencies" that students whose cultural and linguistic background is different from mainstream America are supposed to possess as the traits that impede academic achievement.

Limited English proficiency, low western educational levels of parents, low income level, and cultural differences, among others have been cited as factors that inhibit academic achievement by minority students in schools.

The fact is that there are minority students with "deficit" traits such as the ones I just listed who have succeeded and are still succeeding.

The question that we need to ask is "Why and how do these students succeed?" What are the qualities or conditions that worked for them?

Researchers have categorized minorities into three groups - autonomous, immigrant, and "dominated".

Autonomous minority groups are usually secure in their distinct cultural identities and are not denied access to high-status jobs within the society. [Ogbu, 1978]

Immigrant minority groups usually have come voluntarily, and are eager to learn the language and fit into the society of their host country.

"Dominated" groups are regarded as inferior by the dominant group and are usually denied access to high-status positions within the institutional structure of the society. The dominated status of a minority group "exposes them to conditions that predispose children to school failure even before they come to school." [Ogbu, 1978]

Minority students who experience academic failure tend to belong to one of the groups in a "dominated relationship to the majority group." [Cummins, 1986]

The history of Alaska Natives tells a bleak progression from autonomous groups to domination by another society. The schooling process was used, instead of war, to gain dominance.

The late Dr. Eben Hopson, the first mayor of the North Slope Borough described the experiences that Alaska's Native peoples encountered with the western educational system.

"Eighty-seven years ago, when we were persuaded to send our children to western educational institutions, we began to lose control over the education of our youth. Many of our people believed that formal educational systems would help us acquire the scientific knowledge of the western world. However, it was more than technological knowledge that the educators wished to impart. The educational policy was to attempt to assimilate us into the American mainstream at the expense of our culture. The schools were committed to teaching us to forget our language and Inupiat heritage. This outrageous treatment and the exiling of our youth to school in foreign environments were to remain the common practices of the educational system."

The dislocation of young children from their families as early as the 1940s began the process of deculturation for most of Alaska's Native peoples.

In 1983, Dr. Sixten S. R. Haraldson wrote that "socio-medical problems of increasing dimensions among traditional groups, such as alcoholism, divorce, suicide, neurosis, and juvenile delinquency have been explained by deculturation." [Haraldson, 1983]

Among Alaska Natives alcoholism and alcohol-related problems can be considered the number one health problem. One study states that Alaskan Natives account for 60 percent of the deaths due to alcoholism; 67 percent of all client admissions to State-funded alcoholism programs in Alaska; and 25 percent of the deaths due to cirrhosis of the liver. This same study cites 43 percent of all suicides; 38 percent of all homicides; 42 percent of all homicide arrests; 44 percent of all aggravated assault arrests; and 31 percent of arrests for forcible rape associated with the Alaska Native population. [Report of the Secretary's Task Force on Black & Minority Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Volume VII: Chemical Dependency and Diabetes, January 1986]

Forbes and Van Der Hyde in 1986 reported that the rate of suicides among 15-24 year old Alaska Native males was more than six times the natural norm for white males in the same age group.

Hlady and Middaugh, in late 1986, reported that the rate of suicides committed by Alaska Native males between the ages of 20-

24 years was 257 per 100,000. This rate is 13 times the Alaskan average. (Interim Report of the Senate Special Committee on Suicide Prevention, March 1988)]

Alaska's Native peoples will emerge from this period of instability and self-destruction.

We must listen to the students as they tell us what it is that is impeding their success as students.

During 1987, the Governor's Interim Commission on Children and Youth conducted public hearings on the status of children and youth in Alaska. The Commission made a report which contained 84 recommendations.

The 84th recommendation which focused on multicultural experiences emphasized that "feelings of discrimination and cultural distance" play a key role in the emotional, spiritual, and physical well-being of Alaska Native youth.

The same report stated that Native students are twice as likely to dropout from schools as are non-Natives. As a dropout the Native student is twice as likely to become a substance abuser, is 60% less likely to be employed over the next decade, and when employed will earn one-third less than graduates, and is more likely to land in jail.

Native youth who testified before the GICCY Commission repeatedly emphasized the role of cultural discrimination in the low self-esteem of many Native youth.

Unless our schools address and learn to deal with the issues of racial and cultural discrimination, the healing process cannot begin for our minority students. Our schools shape attitudes. A student has to feel accepted and comfortable in school in order to do his or her best.

In May 1987, the editor of the Harvard Educational Review wrote, "The persistence of racism and its corrosive effects on the moral fabric of America are matters of deep concern to the editors of the Review. We are particularly sensitive to the critical role of schooling in shaping attitudes among both the perpetrators and victims of racism."

Recent research points to the fact that minority children especially from "dominated" groups need to feel good about their respective heritage language and culture in order to succeed in school.

Several steps can be taken to begin to alleviate some of the barriers to academic achievement that Alaska Native students face.

First of all, the members of the majority groups and the minority groups must learn to respect each other.

Through our schools we must build understanding and appreciation of differences that each cultural group possesses.

Specifically, the Department of Education, in cooperation with different Native groups, can develop a statewide curriculum for a one semester course which presents the history, language, and culture of each Alaska Native group. This curriculum can be the basis for a one semester required course in middle school, most probably in seventh grade.

Greater knowledge of Alaska Native heritage (history, language, and culture) by Natives and non-natives can only be beneficial for both.

In this same vein of thought, teacher training institutions need to provide adequate preservice and inservice training toward the understanding and appreciation of Alaska Native languages and cultures so that teachers can be more culturally and linguistically sensitized to teach Alaska Native children.

Another one of the characteristics offered to rationalize the academic failure of minority students is limited English proficiency.

There is no doubt that English proficiency is essential for educational success.

Presently, there are two schools of thought which have emerged regarding the situation of limited English proficiency students.

One argument is the "insufficient exposure" hypothesis. This argument contends that language-minority students should be provided with maximum exposure to English, that more English exposure will lead to more English achievement. Opponents of bilingual education use this argument. However, recent research shows "either no relationship or a negative relationship between amount of school exposure to the majority language and academic achievement in that language. [Baker & de Kanter, 1981; Cummins, 1983, 1984; Skutnabb-Kangas, 1984]

In another argument, students are identified as having a home language that is different from the school language. This hypothesis is called "linguistic mismatch". This argument is the rationale favored by proponents of bilingual education. However, recent research shows academic success of many minority students and majority students whose instruction has been totally through a second language; this refutes the role of "linguistic mismatch" as an impediment towards achieving academic success. [Cummins, 1986]

But it should be pointed out that those students who do well academically through second language instruction identify positively with the majority culture and are highly motivated to learn the second language. [Cummins, 1981]

On the other hand, those students who do not do well academically through second language instruction are ambivalent towards the majority group, and are insecure about their own cultural identity. [Cummins, Ibid]

Cummins (1986), in presenting a theoretical framework for the empowerment of students from "dominated", groups, stated that students "are 'empowered' or 'disabled' as direct result of their interactions with educators in the schools." This process of "empowerment" or "disabling" of students is contingent upon the extent to which "(1) minority students' language and culture is incorporated into the school program; (2) minority community participation is encouraged as an integral component of children's education; (3) the pedagogy promotes intrinsic motivation on the part of students to use language actively in order to generate their own knowledge; and (4) professionals involved in assessment become advocates for minority students rather than legitimizing the location of the "problem" in the students" [Cummins, 1986].

Students who are confident about their cultural identity and have also developed a good grasp of academic and interactional skills succeed in school. [Cummins, 1983 and Tikunoff, 1983]

During the May 19-20, 1988 Native Education Summit Meeting which was sponsored jointly by the Alaska Federation of Natives and the Alaska Department of Education, one of the education priorities identified was to provide opportunities for Alaska Native languages and cultures to be taught to children and to adults.

The state, through its various departments, should encourage Alaska Native communities to establish cultural centers that can serve as coordinating agencies for various educational and social programs for school age children.

Besides being devoted to the teaching of Alaska Native skills, stories, knowledge of the land and sea, and consequently Alaska Native values and behavior, the cultural centers can also have early childhood care and development programs. Traditionally among Alaska's Native peoples, the elders had a very important role as teachers of young children. The grandparent and the grandchild relationship was central to the transmission of cultural knowledge.

The partnership between the community and the school can facilitate parenting and early childhood care and development programs that are culturally and academically appropriate. In those communities that chose to consciously maintain and enrich their Native languages, the cultural center can serve as the "nurturing" space and time for that activity.

Not only can a community cultural center serve as a learning center for elementary, middle, and high school students, it can also serve as a "learning center" for young parents who wish to

take evening courses in their heritage language and culture.

The cultural centers can also form partnerships with the postsecondary institutions in their communities. Part of a teacher training institution's preservice or inservice programs, especially those focusing on cross-cultural activities, can be held in the cultural centers. The possibilities for cooperative instruction are exciting.

The community cultural learning center can also serve as an ideal place for a counseling office.

The schools have been the most pervasive and persuasive force of deculturation of Alaska's Native peoples. It is time that they in partnership with the native communities they serve be used as the vehicles for empowering Alaska's Native children to succeed in life.

Humanity's history has been one long power struggle and it will continue to become more acute as resources dwindle. It saddens me but I think it can only become worse unless humans truly learn to share and be compassionate towards each other.

The best place to begin is in the schools.

TESTIMONY FOR HEARING ON
QUALITY EDUCATION FOR MINORITIES PROJECT
TOGETHER WITH
SENATE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON SCHOOL PERFORMANCE
August 26-27, 1988
Anchorage, Alaska

This presentation will provide ideas on what seems to have worked with Native young people or adults to increase their likelihood of graduating from high school and doing well in college. This does not deal adequately with the very important, perhaps one of the most high risk group which is late adolescent and early adult men. They still remain differentially at high risk with respect to suicide and accidents. I present this testimony with a sense of a bit of frustration and the act humbles me. I have read the many reports on Native education from Meriam to Havinghurst, NAACP, Kennedy and our special task forces here in Alaska. I know what I and others will say probably repeats much; however, the fact only reinforces the importance of achieving progress on this very issue. I will share a few that I believe are most important; ones that may cross over between K-2 and higher education. I will speak of a direction, in a sense, or a road on which we travel. The assumption is that adequate time must be given to see results and that no single panacea exists. I honestly wish there was one.

1. Importance of a close school-community and family relationship. Alaska's small rural schools are achieving this. Rural schools graduate students at such a level that a "dropout problem," such as that we see among Alaskan Natives in Fairbanks or Anchorage does not exist in these schools. Small rural schools need curricula enrichment; need to access resources through technology; however, with teachers educated to use the strengths inherent in small schools and communities, support from family and community, with the principal or principal-teacher seeing his/her school as the community's, a relationship can develop such that home and school reinforce each other.

I had a chance to see this in three disparate geographical areas: one was the elementary school in Barrow, two others in Manokotak and Togiak, another in an Odawa reserve school in northern Ontario, and the third, a summer school for native children in Minneapolis. In all instances children were happy and interested; elders and parents felt comfortable in these school and cross-generational reinforcement of education, the building of high expectations took place. I saw a community school truly built in such a way that children wanted to learn and share their knowledge. They were places where children spoke and were heard. In schools one saw certain qualities. Some were in all, others in some of the schools.

- (A) Strong Native leadership was at work in boards and administration. Native principals or education directors with good boards were in existence.

- (B) An excellent cadre of Native teachers were in place and supported. They were allowed to teach and relate to children in ways in which they were comfortable. They were classroom teachers not only aides or bilingual teachers. Non-Native teachers indicated that they learned much from their Native teacher colleagues.
- (C) The culture and language of the community were utilized throughout the curriculum not simply as Native studies or bilingual education. The expectation was that this school served their Native constituency; therefore, it was the school's referent.
- (D) The school was accountable to the community. They reported to an assembly, a band council, or a Native parent group. Measures of accountability were being put in place, or in place. Dennis Demmert will address this issue of policy, budgets, and measure of accountability this afternoon. I only want to raise accountability as a need. Parents need to have responsibility for their children's performance and assist schools. One can't do so if they don't know as a community how well the school is doing for all the children. Nor can the school perform without a feedback mechanism that is from the community. I am part of a group with Ruth Meyers which is developing a model and process for accrediting schools with substantial numbers of Indian students in Minneapolis. The group, called the American Indian Accreditation Association, is compiling research and input from community groups on which it will base an on-site evaluation. The development of methods to evaluate and accredit schools from a Native point of view holds great potential.
- (E) In each instance, the leadership in the school imbue high expectations in teachers. Each leader saw the child as possessing potential, if they could build a learning environment in the school and between home and school, rather than seeing the child as deficient. At the same time, these leaders were not naive about learning disabilities, FAS, otis media problems; however, they assumed potential and worked to maximize it.

For higher education programs the same elements are important. Our universities have had a problem retaining Native students. Retention and numbers of graduates are not at the level we would like to see. The problem institutionally happens in the freshman or between freshman and sophomore years. From my experience, the causes are many. I will enumerate only a few.

1. Poor academic preparation such that young people have undue anxiety and stress related to taking tests, studying, reading texts, and participating in class. A recent study we are completing on psycho social factors in stress during transition to the university indicates stress toward academic concerns has the highest single factor loading among those studied.

2. Social disruption involved in the loss of social support from family, friends, and community exacerbated by being in a context that utilizes rules for social performances which are jarring, uncomfortable, or scary, e.g., talk louder, speak up. I have seen Native students unable to get a turn to speak from a secretary because they don't "butt in," while others come later and do "butt in" and do get a turn.
3. A sense of shame acquired from professors and students' stereotypic comments or by courses and research presented concerning Natives which brand them as problems. As one Native student told a group, she learned to feel that herself, her everyday life, community and culture were problematic and in need of help and change. What was her everyday normal community life was seen through radically different colored lenses. Few positive Native role models in the university existed; nothing about normal and competent Native people was presented unless it was the "old days." It was as if all those who were important lived in the past and the present was a big problem. To say the least, this made it difficult for her to learn and took a great deal more effort than one would characteristically need.
4. A sense in the University of no home. Much of what has been said above indicates that my opinion is that Native young people in K-12 and University need curricula, course content, social situations, i.e., the specifics of institutional settings which resonate with them rather than alienate them. In Alaska, we have made some progress on these issues:
 - (A) UAF's extensive Rural Student Services, the UAF Native Studies Programs, NANA House, which brings elders and youth together in a dormitory that is homelike, these all provide the type of social and academic support that prevents social disruption and leads to higher retention. The Kuskokwim Campus Institute on Languages and Thought, Chukchi's use of light pen technology to teach developmental English and Math, and the school districts with higher education counselors who follow students into college build strengths to cope with college level work.
 - (B) Our new College of Rural Alaska within the University of Alaska Fairbanks brings together all the rural branch campuses, former community colleges, and bachelors and graduate programs in the social sciences and education to respond to rural higher education needs. We work to build a flow of students through a bridge and transition from high school into the first two years of college and into the professions of teaching, social work, community development, and village corporate management. What we are attempting to do is to open a typical university such that its teaching, research, and service are based on the

needs of Alaska's rural communities. This is a radical shift in referents since universities primarily serve their fields and see students as a future repository of primarily western knowledge. We, however, are attempting to educate all teachers, all social workers, psychology and sociology majors with a cross-cultural perspective, with a referent that is external and community based. Our research is to address questions of importance to rural and Native communities. We recruit as energetically as possible for Alaskan Native, American Indian faculty and non-Native faculty with experience and sensitivity to Native communities. We actively recruit and develop support systems for Alaskan Natives. In short, we are building within the University a college that has rural and Native constituencies as its referent. Students of all backgrounds who learn in this environment are enriched and well prepared for the increasingly multicultural world in which we live. Native and other minority students find courses in which their voice and that of their communities are present. Results of approaches such as these have been effective. For example, our small teacher education programs, off campus and on campus, in 15 years have graduated over 33% of all Native graduates in the 75 years off UAF's existence.

As a summary, I want to suggest:

1. Nationally, that each state at least designate one of its major research-teaching universities to take a cross-cultural referent in their teaching-research-service mission. This would be similar to what Governor Kean in New Jersey has done in providing specific missions for their institutions of higher education. This may be dangerous if it is seen as eliminating the responsibility of other universities to serve minority populations. However, until we have more than the single program, or programs, adequate resources will not exist to make sufficient progress in generating new research and an institutional climate that attracts minority faculty and students.
2. In Alaska, I recommend we focus our attention on school performance of minority students in the urban areas of Fairbanks and Anchorage. I would suggest we establish magnet schools with the attention being on Alaska Native and or minority student performance, cultural appropriate curricula and methods, minority teachers, those other aspects correlated with better performance of Native students, and a method to provide accountability.
3. In rural schools, the focus needs to be on improving the quality of instruction and the relationship between school and community. The University and school districts need to form a partnership for developing Native teacher training, in-service education for teachers, assessing performance of teachers and administrators, and a research agenda to improve minority achievement.

On a policy basis, we need to allow the small rural schools to continue to exist and support their development. In a context of support to highlight deficiencies can lead to creative solutions. Without that message of support, communities feel a type of apprehension that only increases their sense of precariousness. Again, I recommend to policy makers that we insure that our educational institutions which serve Native students are accountable and responsible for the performance of these students. What is critical is a national and statewide shift to recognizing that our future is as a multicultural society. Schools need to build their teaching force, curricula, administrative practices from such a multicultural referent rather than assuming the anglo western referent is universal.

8/25/88

NEWS RELEASE

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

PUBLIC INFORMATION, P.O. BOX F, JUNEAU, ALASKA 99811

MORE INFORMATION: HARRY GAMBLE. 465-2821

August 16, 1988

For Immediate Release

The state of Alaska, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the Carnegie Foundation are joining forces to examine ways to improve education for minority Americans, including Alaska Natives and other minority groups in the 49th State.

The three groups will hold a joint public hearing in Anchorage August 26 and 27, beginning at 8:30 a.m., at the University of Alaska Anchorage, Room ARTS 117 in the Arts Building.

Alaska will be represented by the Senate Special Committee on School Performance, chaired by Senator Willie Hensley of Kotzebue. The committee's assignment is to determine what actions may be required to produce improved performance of schools in Alaska. The hearing will be the first conducted by the senate committee. Other members of the Senate Special Committee are: Senator Jan Faiks of Anchorage, Senator Jim Duncan of Juneau, Senator Ken Fanning of Fairbanks and Senator John Binkley of Bethel.

Several members of the MIT and the Carnegie Foundation's joint project, called Quality Education for Minorities (QEM), will join Hensley's committee for the hearing. It will be the only joint hearing that the Alaska Senate committee will share with Carnegie and MIT.

The two-year long QEM Project, guided by a 35 member blue ribbon nationwide panel, is holding hearings across the United States to develop a comprehensive plan to improve the education of American Indians, Blacks, Mexican Americans, Alaska Natives and Puerto Ricans. According to QEM, the minority groups are ones that, "despite past efforts, continue disproportionately to lack the skills needed to participate effectively in a society increasingly based on high technology."

QEM's final product will be an action plan with educational goals for minorities at the secondary and postsecondary levels that extend to the year 2001.

Carnegie and MIT are funding the QEM project.

Among the 35 members of the QEM advisory group, called Action Council for Minority Education, is Dr. William G. Demmert, Alaska's Commissioner of Education. Other members include: Marian Wright Edelman, President, Children's Defense Fund; Mary Hatwood Futrell, President of National Education Association; Dr. Paul E. Gray, President, MIT; David Hamburg, President Carnegie Corporation; Massachusetts Senator Edward Kennedy; Dr. Dale Parnell, President, American Association of Community and Junior Colleges; Al Shanker, President, American Federation of Teachers; Dr. Donald M. Stewart, President, The College Board; and others.

The Alaska Department of Education has invited organizations and leaders who represent minority interests in Alaska to testify at the hearing. For more information contact: Edna MacLean, Special Assistant to Commissioner Demmert for Rural and Native Education, 465-2800; or Bob Arnold, Project Director, Senate Special Committee on School Performance, 465-3862. Citizens can also submit written comments to MacLean or Arnold.

Testimony for Home-based Early Childhood
Education and Parenting Programs

By

Edward K. Thomas
President
Tlingit and Haida Central Council

Children begin formalized education at an earlier and earlier age for we have found that there is a capacity to learn at a very early age.

Unfortunately, as a result of parent employment needs and parent recognition of the benefit that these programs have to the children, these young children are being institutionalized and separated from their parents in order to participate in formalized educational experiences. This early separation from the parent at such an early age may cause irreparable harm to the future parent-child harmony that is so important in the child's education process.

Further, one of the most important "life roles" of a parent is that of providing guidance and direction to the next generation, yet, our Jr. high and High schools do little to the educating of future parents as to what their role is in the education process of their children.

The conditions children and families must face in today's world are startling. The minority child is especially at risk due to high poverty levels, high school drop out rates, teenage pregnancy,

suicide, alcohol/drug abuse, family violence, unemployment, and social injustices due to racism.

For minority children to grow and learn to their full potential, comprehensive support services must be available to the entire family. Children need the support of the family and community structure to thrive.

Child development programs which include the parent as the primary educator and caretaker of the child need to be more available to all minority children. Minority children do not need patch-work, cosmetic, attractive but ineffective solutions to educational, development and social problems. Minority children need tested, successful programs which meet the needs of the child and the family.

Successful early childhood development programs such as Head Start and early childhood home-based education must have several components:

1. Educational curriculum which is developmentally appropriate;
2. Parent involvement which recognizes parents as the child's primary teacher and caretaker, and offers educational opportunities to enhance parenting skills;
3. Health habit development;
4. Social skills development; and
5. Physical development;

The minority child must be involved in programs which enhance the development of the "whole child" (physically, emotionally and cognitively).

Options such as Home-based child development programs which offer educational and other support services to families of young children must be implemented. It is a fact that: the positive impact gained by good early childhood development programs is maintained only if the program has a direct impact on the family.

Early childhood development programs for minority children cannot shut out the family by institutionalizing children in programs which do not include families. Leaders in programs for young children must strive to bring families and their children closer, to offset the forces which separate and dissolve the family unit.

KEY FACTS ABOUT THE NATIONS CHILDREN

Half of the four and five year-olds in the nation have mothers working outside the home, but only a few receive quality child care.

Of every 100 children born today:

- 20 will be born out of wedlock;
- 40 will live in a female-headed household before adulthood;
- 13 will be born to a teenage mother;
- 15 will be born into a household where no parent is employed;
- 25 will be on welfare at some point prior to adulthood;

More than one of every five American children was poor in 1985. Of them, more than 40 percent lived in families with incomes of less than half of the poverty level.

Food stamps reach only about two-thirds of the poor Americans eligible for them.

Hundreds of thousands of children and parents will become homeless this year alone.

The average monthly payment by the states for all subsistence costs of a child on AFDC was \$117.70 in 1985 - less than half of the average new car monthly installment payment by Americans that year.

Each year 1.1 million teenage girls get pregnant and nearly half a million give birth.

The United States, infant mortality rates tied for the worst ranking among twenty industrialized nations during the 1980-1985 period. Thirty years earlier the United States ranked sixth best among the same countries.

Teens who by age fourteen or fifteen have very weak basic skills are five times more likely to become mothers before age sixteen than those with average basic skills.

Minorities are proportionately over-represented in these statistics.

SOURCE: A Children's Defense Budget: An Analysis of our Nations Investment in Children FY'88; Children's Defense Fund, Washington, D.C.

North Slope Borough School District



September 1, 1988

Senator Willie Hensley
Alaska State Legislature
P.O. Box V
Juneau, Alaska 99811

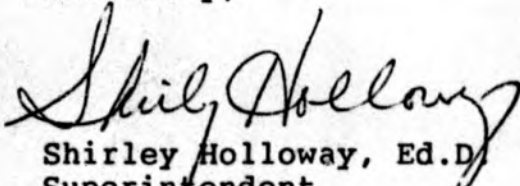
Dear Willie:

On behalf of the North Slope Borough School District, thank you for giving us the opportunity to testify at the Public Hearing on August 26 and 27, sponsored by the Senate School Performance Committee and the MIT Quality Education for Minorities Project.

For the record, enclosed are copies of written testimonies which were given by Leona Okakok, School Board Member; Brenda Itta, Special Assistant to the Superintendent; and myself. Relevant materials on effective schooling on the North Slope are also enclosed.

We appreciate the time you made to hear our concerns. We look forward to receiving any follow-through reports as a result of the Public Hearings. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,


Shirley Holloway, Ed.D.
Superintendent

cc: ✓ Bob Arnold, c/o Senator Hensley's Office
Brenda Itta, Special Assistant to the Superintendent

Effective Alaskan Minority Education

Shirley J. Holloway, Ed.D.

North Slope Borough School District

Members of the Senate Special Committee and visiting officials from MIT and the Carnegie Foundation, thank you for this opportunity to testify.

In working toward the improvement of student performance, the principles of effective schooling apply. I would like to limit and focus my remarks on effective schooling to improve student performance.

Several years ago, Governor Hammond formed a Task Force on Effective Schooling. In 1981 the task force was charged with three responsibilities:

1. To clarify the responsibilities of schools
2. To identify practices essential to effective schooling
3. To submit a report to the Governor which would contain a list of practices essential to effective schooling and recommendations for implementation of practices statewide.

This effort involved a broad cross-section of individuals from all over the state, including professional and lay

people, Native people and non-Native people.

After months of work which included clearly defining the differences between schooling and education, the final report was divided into five sections:

1. The goals of education
2. Minimum curriculum offerings
3. Primary conditions (conditions under the control of the school and necessary for effective schooling)
4. Research findings, i.e. research found practices which could significantly improve the performance of students
5. Recommendations to the State Board of Education

The report was exemplary and established needed direction based on state of the art information. (See Attachment A) However, in 1983 the work of the Task Force was abandoned. To my knowledge a minimal effort continues through one staff development person at the State Department of Education. This individual coordinates training opportunities in effective schooling through grant dollars and district contributions.

However, effective schooling research continues and we

North Slope Borough School District
Shirley C. Holloway, Ed.D.
Superintendent

have a body of knowledge on how to increase student performance that is by and large not practiced or promoted by districts or by the state. No matter what research on effective schooling you review, five correlates continue to surface:

1. School Climate
2. Instructional Focus
3. The Principal is an Instructional Leader
4. Teacher Behavior/High Expectations
5. Measurement

(See Attachment B)

Our job is to make sure our schools are effective. Effective meaning all students, regardless of sex, socio-economic background or race, are mastering basic skills.

If our schools become effective all students, Native and non-native will benefit. The most basic principle of effective schooling is the belief that ALL CHILDREN CAN LEARN.

Cultural issues are embedded in the five effective schooling correlates. For example, the correlate on

teacher behavior/high expectations addresses the concept of unconscious bias as a critical element. Teacher behavior is examined to make sure that the overt and covert behavior of the teacher in the classroom communicates high expectations for all students. It examines instructional strategies such as questioning, time on task and wait time as they relate to student equity.

In our District new staff have an orientation that stresses an understanding of how their personal values stem from their parent culture, how personal values differ from culture to culture and have the potential for unconscious cultural clashes. We also stress cross-cultural communication and current Native issues and concerns.

The correlate called Instructional Focus is critical. Our Board has set the stage for academic excellence knowing that we must first become effective before we can become excellent. We have looked at the improvement of our schooling by concentrating on the content (what is to be taught), instructional methodology (how we will teach the content), and assessment of children (did the students master what they were taught). (See Attachment C)

Our Competency Based Education program (the content) has

- Competencies for all basic skills with the expectation that all students will master them
- Standards to be met at grades 3 and 6

(See Attachment D, E)

Our instructional model is called KIITA (Knowing Instruction in Theory and Application) which is a model of teaching based upon principals of learning.

Time prohibits me from expanding on all of the correlates of effective schooling and the progress the North Slope Borough School District has made in their effort to strive for effectiveness. The central message is for the last 20 years the body of research has grown, been refined and replicated by Edmonds, Lezzote, Brookover and others. We know that all five of the correlates must be present to produce an effective school.

Effective Schooling depends on change at the building level. This is a critical concept because this causes the State Department of Education, Legislators and Central Office personnel, University personnel and School Board members to reassess their role in improving student performance. Improving student performance begins in the

school and is based on the dynamics between the student and teacher. Thus the need to seriously look at teacher preparation as it relates to content knowledge and methodology (science of teaching) is imperative. Other agencies must assume leadership roles in providing technical assistance and financial support.

How do we get Alaskan schools to be more effective? By implementing what we already know about effective schooling practices at the building level within the cultural context of our communities not using cultural diversity as an excuse for students not achieving.

The empirical data base on effective schooling is more than sufficient. The question is whether schools have the ability to replicate the characteristics of effectiveness in all schools. I believe that the correlates of effective schools CAN be established in all schools. I believe that establishing the correlates of effective schools will produce the same benefits in Alaskan schools as they are in many of the schools in the lower 48 states.

My understanding is that the work of the Governor's Task Force on Effective Schooling was used successfully by Northwest Regional Laboratories to assist schools in the lower 48 states to achieve the goal of effectiveness. But Alaska's schools did not benefit from the study that was

conducted within our own state. Just about the time pilots for effective schools were to begin in selected rural schools the project died. However, some school boards and districts such as the North Slope Borough School District have been working on their own on the goal of developing effective schools. Our schools need to focus on implementing the correlates of effective schooling at the building level. The focus must be on the school and what occurs in the classroom. We must focus on our business -- teaching children. Our business is to make sure all children learn.

"If schools and school systems are to be effective in providing at least basic skills education for all students, the total school culture has to be addressed simultaneously. The elements of the complex school social system are interwoven and interrelated. To be successful, a reform movement must acknowledge and involve them all.

First, the equity and equal access features must be addressed or too much effort is used in racial, sexual, and handicapped battles.

Second, there must be a constant reminder that all students can, and are expected to, learn. The reminder, or belief, in the educability of all children is then

translated through systematic programs which help all children learn.

Third, there must be clear understanding of the curriculum so that teachers know what is expected to be taught and students know what is expected to be learned.

Fourth, there must be a strong commitment to staff development programs which give the local school or school system employees the new skills which are required to see that all children learn.

Fifth, there must be a feedback system based on student achievement so that corrective measures can be taken at short intervals when it is determined that 11 students are not achieving.

Finally, because the collaboration of people is essential to successful school reform, there must be a system which allows the primary adult parties -- parents, teachers, administrators, and other school employees -- to relate to each other on the basis of each party's interest and expertise rather than each party's power (Kelwyn Script: Overview of Effective Schools)."

Based on the above, I recommend that:

1. The state Department of Education Play a key leadership role in informing, inspiring and instructing educators and the public at large in effective schooling through:
 - a. Superintendent/School Board Academics on effective schooling
 - b. Continue and expand State Leadership Academics, Rural Mentor Teacher programs and Project Lead
 - c. Develop the human resources to provide technical assistance to school districts in implementing aspects of effective schooling.
 - d. Strengthen certification requirements for teachers and administrators
 - e. Reinstate our involvement in research in Alaska as it relates to the effective schooling correlates
 - f. Through the State Department of Education Public Information Office inform the public about effective schooling
2. The University of Alaska working collaboratively with school districts to develop stronger teacher preparation programs. Address:

- a. Internships
 - b. Student Teaching
 - c. Content Knowledge
 - d. Methodology (Science of Teaching)
 - e. Cross-cultural education
3. University of Alaska, State Department of Education and school districts:
- a. Consider developing effective schooling academies based on the successful Alaska Writing Project Model
4. Legislature:
- a. Fund ECE programs as a part of the Foundation Formula
 - b. Fund statewide staff development academics
 - c. Fund alternative programs for high risk students
 - d. Fund State Department of Education so effective schooling becomes a part of their mission

We on the North Slope believe all children can learn. We have seen significant growth since the first time we administered Standardized tests in 1975. Are we pleased with where we are? No. But what we see is steady

growth. Our first and second graders are on or above grade level and we believe this is due to our strong Early Childhood Education program that emphasizes language development.

Thank you for providing time to address this critical area of school performance.

"Are We Really Involving Everyone In The Definition of School Effectiveness?"

EXHIBIT #1

EFFECTIVE SCHOOL CORRELATES

Definitions and Attributes

CORRELATE: INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

Definition: The principal acts as the instructional leader who effectively communicates the mission of the school to the staff, parents, community and students and who understands and applies the characteristics of the instructional program of the school.

Attributes:

- The instructional leader defines the mission.
- The instructional leader manages the curriculum and instruction.
- The instructional leader communicates with school and community.

CORRELATE: INSTRUCTIONAL FOCUS

Definition: There is a clearly articulated mission for the school through which the staff shares an understanding of and a commitment to instructional goals, objectives, priorities, assessment procedures and accountability. There is also a

collaborative planning process in place which is designed to improve student performance.

Attributes:

- Teachers and administrators have established a clearly-defined school mission.
- A belief that all children can learn is maintained.
- The school mission is collaboratively developed into goals and objectives.
- Educators are held accountable for student learning.
- A sense of total commitment for school and community can be observed.
- A basic standardized curriculum that reflects the school's goal is in place.

CORRELATE: MEASUREMENT

Definition: Feedback on student academic progress is frequently obtained. Multiple assessment methods such as teacher-made tests, informal teacher observations and assessment, mastery skills checklists, criterion-referenced tests and norm-references tests are used. Other sources of data which are not test related such as attendance data and dropout rates are also appropriate. The results of testing and other available data are used to improve individual student performance and the instructional program.

Attributes:

- A commitment to use multiple sources of data to monitor students academic progress and instructional programs is evident.
- Collected data is disaggregated into useful categories.
- Measurement decisions reflect school district's goals and priorities.
- Modifications of the instructional program results as a consequence of analyzing the data collected.

CORRELATE: HIGH EXPECTATIONS

Definition: The school displays a climate of expectations in which staff believes and demonstrates that all students can attain mastery of basic skills and that the staff has the capability to help students achieve such mastery.

Attributes:

- The belief all students can learn is shared by community, staff, students and administration.
- Clearly defined schoolwide policies are written to address discipline, attendance and instruction.
- Teachers and administrators demonstrate an

awareness of biases held towards low-SES, race, gender, and individual capabilities.

•Teachers are held accountable to ensure there is engaged academic learning time for all students.

CORRELATE: SCHOOL CLIMATE

Definition: There is an atmosphere which is orderly without being rigid, quiet without being oppressive, and generally conducive to teaching and learning. The school has a pleasant, clean, and safe environment.

Attributes:

- The environment is businesslike and conducive to learning.
- Facilities are clean and in good repair.
- Students, faculty, and administration respect property and the rights of others to learn.
- Clear rules, policies, and expectations are in place.

SCHOOL/PARENTAL/COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT
Although not usually considered a separate correlate, higher achieving schools have a close cooperative relationship with parents and community. This is manifested through the following attributes:

Correlate: Instructional Leadership

- The instructional leader communicates with school and community.
- The instructional leader involves the community and reports student achievement.

Correlate: Instructional Focus

- A sense of total commitment from school and community can be observed.
- The media is informed of the school's mission.

Correlate: High Expectations

- The belief all students can learn is shared by community, staff, students, and administration.
- Teachers and administrators provide quality feedback to students, parents, and community.
- Teachers and administrators communicate schoolwide policies consistently to students and community.

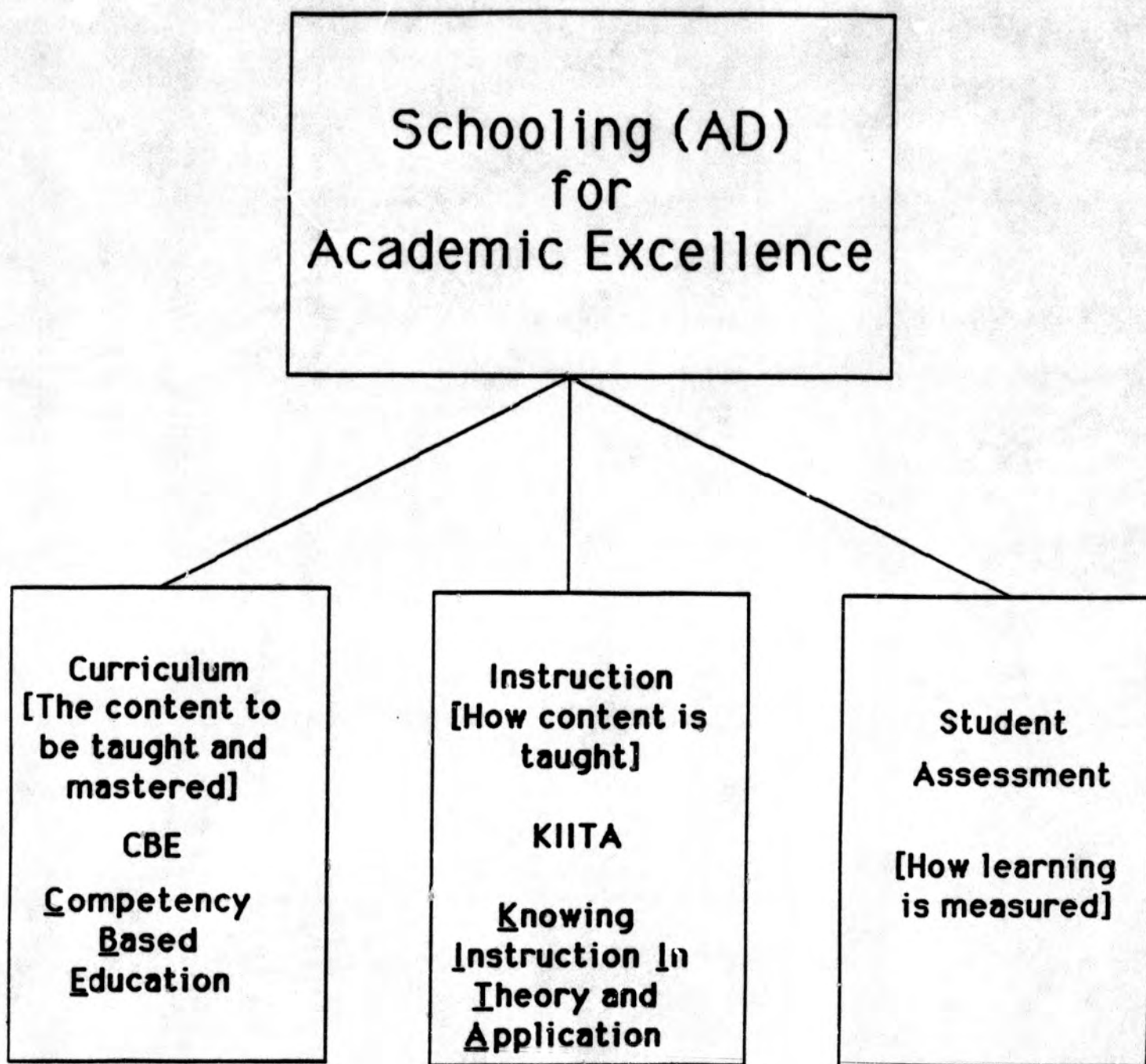
Correlate: School Climate

Faculty, students and community work together to make school a pleasant place.

Correlate: Measurement

Parents and the community are kept aware of student academic progress.

**North Slope Borough School District
Pouch 160
Barrow AK 99723**



Curriculum
[The content to be
taught and mastered]

CBE

**Competency
Based
Education**

**Essential Elements
of**

CBE

- Standards
- Competencies
- Accountability
- Time
- Belief

Essential Elements of CBE

- Standards
- Competencies
- Accountability
- Time
- Belief

• Standards

Student qualifies for
1st grade: 1988
4th grade: 1990
7th grade: 1993

• Competencies

Essential (CORE) learnings
in Math, L.A., Reading,
Computer Technology K-6

Essential (CORE) learnings
in all High School courses

Essential Elements of CBE (Continued)

- **ACCOUNTABILITY**

Teachers know specifically
what to teach

Student knows what he/she
is to master

Parent/others know what
is expected

- **TIME**

Student given more
or less learning time
rather than modifying
the standard or
competency

- **BELIEF**

All children can
master the CORE
competencies

Instruction
[How content is taught]

KIITA

**Knowing
Instruction In
Theory and
Application**

**Essential Elements
of
KIITA**

- Teach to an objective
- Select sub skills at the correct level of difficulty
- Monitor the progress of the students and adjust the teaching
- Use the principles of learning

Essential Elements of

KIITA

- Teach to an objective
- Select sub skills at the correct level of difficulty
- Monitor the progress of the students and adjust the teaching
- Use the principles of learning

- **TEACH TO AN OBJECTIVE**

- Formulate an instructional objective
- Generate teacher behaviors congruent to intended objective(s)
- Demonstrate use of Bloom's Taxonomy

Essential Elements of KIITA

- Teach to an objective
- Select sub skills at the correct level of difficulty
- Monitor the progress of the students and adjust the teaching
- Use the principles of learning

• SELECT SUB SKILLS AT THE CORRECT LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

- Formulate a task analysis
- Use the task analysis as the basis for the diagnostic prescriptive process

Essential Elements of KIITA

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- **MONITOR THE PROGRESS OF THE STUDENTS AND ADJUST THE TEACHING**

- Elicit observable behavior from students that is in harmony with the objective
- Check the measurable behavior
- Use the task analysis of the objective and/or knowledge of the principles of learning to interpret the measurable behavior of students
- Act on the interpretation

Essential Elements of

KIITA

- Teach to an objective
- Select sub skills at the correct level of difficulty
- Monitor the progress of the students and adjust the teaching
- Use the principles of learning

- **USE THE PRINCIPLES OF
LEARNING THAT AFFECT:**

- Focus
- Rate & degree
- Retention
- Transfer

COMPETENCY BASED EDUCATION

The North Slope Borough School District is moving from an individualized instruction program to one of Competency Based Education. Competencies have been developed for Grades K-8. These competencies correspond to broad, general standards.

In 1990, all third grade students will be required to pass an exam to demonstrate mastery of the competencies in Language Arts, Reading, Math, and Computer Technology. In 1993, all sixth grade students will be required to pass a Competency Based test.

In secondary programs, competencies are being written for each course. The development of the Competency Based Education program is on-going and is based on the belief that all children can learn and succeed and that the school is responsible for manipulating the timeline for learning, not the curriculum or the expectations.