

ALASKA LEGISLATURE COMMITTEE FILES 1997-1998 8672

9148 HOUSE HEALTH EDUCATION & SOCIAL SERVICES

59

What theory of equity supports an equity determination on the basis of dollars per student? Isn't the purpose of equity funding systems to create variances in order to accommodate for needed adjustments based on identified difference factors?

This is the reason for the study. See page 44. "Disparity in per-student allocations is intended to compensate for differences in the cost of operating schools—and school districts—of various size and location in Alaska, thus making the formula more equitable than one which allocates money in precise proportion to the number of students. It is important to understand that variation in the amount of aid received per student does not necessarily imply inequity. *Size and location adjustments are included in the formula specifically to create disparity in order to compensate for relative differences in school operating costs.*" [Emphasis added.]

How were the adjusted student counts in Table 3 derived? Is it the consultant's position that lower standard deviation and spread prove it is more equitable than current law?

Adjusted student counts for each funding community—and the formula for conversion—are shown in Appendix C. The comment/question appears to confuse disparity and equity. The terms are clearly different, as discussed in the immediately preceding response.

Does the consultant know that under either current law or the statistical approach in Table 3 the funding equity is the same when tested against unadjusted dollars?

Yes, but it is disparity that is the same, not necessarily equity.

Were market baskets developed for each school size category? If not, what justification does the consultant have for interval weights and the incremental multipliers associated with each category?

The school size categories cover *instructional*, or *school level* costs and the "market basket" reflects school staffing patterns. The weights are based on actual staffing levels in schools, as described in Chapter 2. The market basket analysis produced multipliers based on *district level costs*, as discussed in Chapters 3 and 4.

Was the actual percent of each district's expenditures applied in arriving at NPS and administrative costs, or was every district forced into the statewide average?

Each district's actual expenditure proportions were applied. No statewide average was used. See pages 85 and 97.

The consultant seems to think that school funding levels should be established by the legislature before applying a distribution formula, rather than first determining the funding levels needed to provide an adequate education for Alaska's children. Is this true?

The report has nothing to do with determination of need in a philosophical sense. The intent of the report was to develop new size and location adjustment factors to compensate for *relative* differences between districts, not to determine the level of education funding in total or for any district. The *LN* defines Basic Need as a level of funding. The report can be used to distribute any level of funding to districts, but the consultant was instructed to leave the level of funding—that is, the determination of Basic Need—in the legislative arena. The pool of money for education is determined politically and by state revenue. Our work provides a basis for allocation the pool.

Are the ACDs in Table 3—ranging from .925 to 1.706—substitutes for the current differentials? On what basis did the consultant arrive at the differentials? Did the consultant decide not to use this approach because it would put more weight into rural districts?

They are used but in the final report they are normalized - .925 to 1.706 is statistically identical to the 1.0 to 1.74 in the final report. See pages 16-20. Location differentials were broken into several components in the January report, combined into a factor that applied only to district level costs in the supplemental summary, then further simplified to apply in the same manner as existing ACDs. The numbers mentioned in the question are "unnormalized" differentials. The range of normalized differentials is 1.0 to 1.74, with most rural districts having a higher differential than under current law. In the process of simplifying the application of the differentials, expenditure limitations were dropped. This increased the differential in several rural districts (compared to the differentials in the January draft).

The school size formula gives some weight above enrollment to students in schools of up to 1,022 students. Does this mean that the consultant does not believe that there is an elementary school in the State of Alaska that is economically efficient or was this done to assure additional weights in larger urban districts?

The answers are no and no. The size factors show that efficiency increases as size increases. They don't mean that efficiency stops at some point. The size conversion table, graphs and accompanying text in Chapter 2 and technical Appendix B show that smaller schools always have greater size adjustment factors than larger schools. The size conversion is independent of location, so there is no urban bias involved. In fact, literature on the subject suggests that adjustments for size should be avoided because they perpetuate inefficiency. Under this framework, the inclusion of size adjustments can be interpreted as rural bias. Elementary schools appear to reach maximum efficiency at 400 to 600 students, but efficiency is a gentle curve rather than a cliff, so there is a gradual decline in size factors as schools increase in size.

The Supplemental Summary's approach to calculating entitlements—a 70 percent-30 percent split—seems to have resulted in a 20 percent change in the shifting of money among school districts. Is this more accurate than the original distribution or could it be that the consultant believes that it is more defensible because 30 percent is supposedly driven by actual expenditures?

No. The consultant makes no recommendation on any split. While the statewide average is about 70/30, this average is weighted by a handful of large districts with large efficient buildings. Most districts currently spend less than 70% of instruction and the range of splits is very wide, from about 50/50 to about 90/10. All of our calculations include each district's unique split. See pages 16-20.

There was no shifting of funds from one district to another as the differentials were simplified—other than the relatively minor shift (in favor of rural districts) due to the dropping of expenditure limits. No set of differentials is more or less defensible than another; each is derived by the same method and all computations involving differentials were driven by actual expenditures. The differentials became smaller as they applied to increasing portions of district expenditures, but the smaller numbers offer only greater simplicity, not greater accuracy.

Now that nonpersonal services have been removed from the school calculations without changing the formula, is it safe to assume that the certificated staff served as a proxy for the NPS costs as well as the noncertificated personnel? Are these not proxies that determine considerably more of the Basic Need distribution than the about 8 percent of Basic Need distribution the current area differentials determine?

Not true. Nonpersonal services costs were not removed from the calculations, the costs were simply combined with other district level costs. Certificated staff costs do not serve as a proxy for NPS or administrative costs. Actual NPS and administrative costs determine the differentials. See pages 16-20.

If the average NPS plus administrative costs were \$1,056 in FY96, how do you explain no district level ACD of less than 1.0?

See page 17. Unadjusted multipliers may be less than 1.0. The district cost factors are normalized multipliers, meaning that each unadjusted multiplier is divided by the lowest multiplier so that the lowest district cost factor is 1.0. This process increases each district cost factor (see Table VII, page 18).

Since the actual district level costs amount to about \$38-\$75 million less than the 30 percent of Basic Need, why is this amount distributed? Could it be that this is one of the areas that the larger urban districts get most of their increases?

See page 104. The 30 percent figure is the statewide average for district level costs. It is used only to determine the amount to be distributed by the district level cost formula, but not to determine the allocation of that amount among districts. If the entire amount were not distributed, rural districts would lose more than urban districts because rural districts tend to have higher cost differentials, so get a disproportionately large share of district level costs.

When we take Alaska Gateway's two weights and multiply them by their respective percentages (70 percent and 30 percent) and multiply that by a per-student allocation we get large differences from the amount shown. How do you explain the large differences?

See pages 16-20. The statewide percentages (70 and 30) are not relevant to this discussion. As the example on page 17 shows, Alaska Gateway's expenditures are 59 and 41 percent, respectively, at the school level and district level.

Why does Skagway receive less per student than Galena and St. Mary's (two similarly sized school districts)?

See Table VII, page 18. The two districts receive 18 percent more basic need per student than Skagway because the District Cost Factors (which adjust for differences in costs between districts) are 18 percent higher than Skagway's DCF.

Why do some districts fare so much better than others?

We cannot respond fully to questions regarding *state aid* because state aid depends on factors (primarily local contributions, federal impact aid and categorical funding) that adjust basic need. These adjustments to basic need were not addressed in our report.

The following example uses Ketchikan and Matanuska as specific examples, but any district's outcome can be analyzed by considering the following points.

Funding Communities versus Schools as the Basic Funding Unit

Technical Appendix B shows the size of each school in Alaska. Matanuska has 15 funding communities and 12,024 students, for an average of 800 students per funding community, while Ketchikan has one funding community for its 2,850 students. Because the "size adjustment" formula (Table 2.2, page 63) rewards small funding communities with additional funding, Matanuska benefits by having many funding communities with fewer students in each.

Under the proposed formula, each of the 28 schools in Matanuska and eight schools in Ketchikan are on equal footing. However, Matanuska's students are split into twice as many basic funding units as under current law (28 schools vs. 15 funding communities) while Ketchikan's students are split into eight times as many funding units (eight schools vs. one funding community) as under current law.

Columns 2-6 of Table 2.1 (page 60) show that the adjusted student count increases for both districts under the proposal (Ketchikan from 2,564 to 3,104 and Matanuska from 11,530 to 12,570). Matanuska gains far less (in percentage terms) than Ketchikan because Matanuska already has several funding communities that contain a single school. Many other districts gain adjusted student counts as well; the important point is each district's share of the statewide adjusted student count.

Columns 4 and 6 of Table 2.1 show that Matanuska's share of the statewide adjusted student count falls while Ketchikan's share increases. Column 7 shows that Matanuska loses three percent of Basic Need due to a change from "funding community" to "school" as the basic funding unit while Ketchikan gains eight percent.

Size Factors

Size factors reflect the formula for converting actual student counts to the adjusted student counts upon which compensation is based (Table 2.2, page 63). The formula favors smaller schools. Technical Appendix B shows the impact of the size formula on each school and district. Matanuska has schools in which each student is counted as 3.05 students (Beryozava school's 13 students) and schools in which students are counted as .99 adjusted students (Colc. school's 1,069 students). The district average is 1.12.

Ketchikan has smaller schools in general, and that translates to higher adjusted student counts. The average student in Ketchikan is counted as 1.18 adjusted students.

This comparison offers only a partial explanation of differences in Basic Need. Table 2.1 shows the impact of the size formula compared to calculations of Basic Need under current law. Matanuska gains two percent while Ketchikan gains three percent (see column 10) compared to the current size formula.

The combined impact of the change to school-based student counts and the revised size formula is that Ketchikan's Basic Need increases by 11 percent while Matanuska's declines by one percent.

Location Adjustment

Table VII, page 18, shows the District Cost Factors (DCF) for each district. These factors compensate for differences in the costs of administration, travel, and other district level

factors that affect the cost of operating districts and schools within districts. Discussions of cost appear in Chapters 3 and 4, and cost data is in Technical Appendix F.

Column 11 of Table VII shows that Ketchikan gets no additional money (a DCF of 1.00 times the adjusted student count gives no increase in the student count) while Matanuska gets a one percent "kicker" to compensate for higher district operating costs. Neither district receives a location adjustment under current law.

Classified Staff

Another potential cause of shifting allocations is shown in Table 2.4 (page 68). The study allocates classified staff in proportion to certified staff as discussed on pages 66 and 67. Some districts now have one classified staff for each 10 (or fewer) students while other have one classified staff for 30 (or more) students). Districts with high student-to-staff ratios tend to have Basic Need increased under the revised formula. Both Ketchikan and Matanuska have relatively high ratios and gain under a redistribution of Basic Need.

Other Factors

The report reviewed only size and location adjustments, both of which were discussed above. However, several other factors affect the amount of state aid districts receive.

- The calculations of Basic Need in the report are based on 1996 data. Current data could change the results slightly.
- Basic Need is reduced by required local contributions and by a portion of federal impact aid in order to determine State aid. Property values and the amount of (and adjustments to) impact aid can affect state aid. Because both districts in this example are "city" districts, changes to federal impact aid should have no significant impact on either district. Matanuska has shown higher growth than Ketchikan, which may mean higher total property valuation, especially given the closure of the Ketchikan pulp mill.
- Pending legislation changes categorical funding from district-specific calculations to a flat 20 percent addition to Basic Need. This does not affect Matanuska significantly, but it increases state aid to Ketchikan by about four percent, because relatively little of its Ketchikan's total aid is due to funding for bilingual, vocational or special education programs.

4/1/98

Hess Committee
Fax 465-3871

Senate Bill 36 -

I don't think 3% Education tax is fair. If your going to do a Education tax it should be state wide. Its hard enough For Rural ^{communities} to get jobs. All kids should have a Right to education, For one thing not All PARENT CAN home school ect. If the State sale land in rural area these children have the right to a fair education. The small school suffer the way it is. Where large school don't, they have nice gyms, sports actives and more class and ~~thidit~~ things to do.

I think Senate Bill 36 should be vetoed.

Barbara Huffman

PO Box 113

Klawock, AK
99925**City of Klawock
Alaska***"Site of the first cannery in Alaska"*

Phone: (907)755-2261

Fax: (907)755-2403

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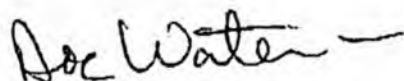
Date: April 1, 1998

TO: HESS Committee
465-3871From: Doc Waterman
Administrator
Phone: 907-755-2261
Fax: 907-755-2403

MESSAGE: Following is a copy of City of Klawock Resolution 98-12, against the passage of CS SB 36, or any similar bill.

The City of Klawock opposes CS SB 36, or any school funding formula which reduces funding for the Klawock School District. To enact a funding formula which takes money away from small rural districts with limited means of maintaining programs while giving additional funding to the largest districts, which have more resources to draw from, is to deny rural children what opportunity they presently have to get an adequate education. I cannot see any kind of equity in this approach. Please oppose this ill-considered attempt to rob our children of their future.

Sincerely,



**City of Klawock, Alaska
Resolution 98-12**

A RESOLUTION OPPOSING ANY SCHOOL FUNDING FORMULA WHICH RESULTS IN A DECREASE IN FUNDING FOR THE KLAWOCK CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT.

Whereas, the school funding formula of the State has not provided for increases in the costs of operating school districts in recent years, and

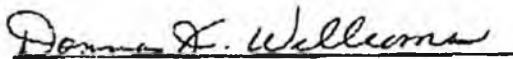
Whereas, the Klawock City School District has suffered reductions in funding from the Forestry Receipts program in each of the last two years, with an especially large reduction in Fiscal Year 98, and

Whereas, there has been an increase in the costs of operating the Klawock City School District as a result of inflation and other causes, and

Whereas, the cumulative impact of these effects has placed an undue burden upon the administration and staff of Klawock City School District and increased the difficulty of providing a sound education for the youth of the City,

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the City Council of the City of Klawock opposes any school funding formula which results in reduced funding for the Klawock City School District.

Passed and approved by the City Council of the City of Klawock this 17th day of March, 1998.

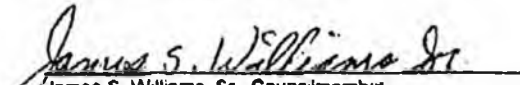

Donna J. Williams, Mayor

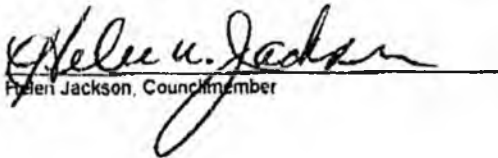
Absent
Henretta J. Kato, Councilmember

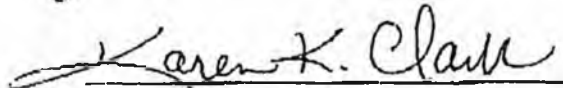
Absent
Raymond Demmert, Councilmember


Don Nickerson, Jr., Councilmember


Joyce W. Schumann, Councilmember


James S. Williams, Sr., Councilmember


Helen Jackson, Councilmember


ATTEST. Karen K. Clark, City Clerk

Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the HES

committee on SB 316 (committee name) dated 4-1-98

bill/subject:

Please pass SB 316, Please Further Work
 on more funding for All education
 so Alaska can be a great Education
 option for our children. But something
 has to happen now to begin the
 process. Thank you for finally
 addressing this problem.

Signed:

Lesia Rezencak

Phone: 225-3237

Testifier

Parent

Representing (Optional)

Box 10401 Ketchikan AK

Address

Fax transmitted from Ketchikan Legislative Information Office
 Phone: 225-9675 Fax: 225-8546



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Please enter into the record my testimony to the HES
 Committee on SENATE BILL NO. 36 Dated 4/1/98
Committee Name
Bill / Subject

EDUCATION OF THE CHILDREN OF ALASKA SHOULD BE THE FIRST PRIORITY OF ITS CITIZENS, ITS LEGISLATORS AND ITS GOVERNOR. TO PASS SB 36 WOULD AMOUNT TO AN ATTACK ON THE CHILDREN OF THE STATE. ^{THE} CLOSING OF RURAL SCHOOLS THAT WOULD SURELY ENSUE WOULD FOREVER ADVERSLEY AFFECT NOT ONLY THE STUDENTS OF THE SPECIFIC SCHOOLS BUT ALSO THE COMMUNITY AND THE STATE AS A WHOLE. IT IS OBVIOUS THAT MANY NATIVE COMMUNITIES WILL BE HIT THE HARDEST BY THE FUNDING CUTS, FORCING REMOVAL OF CHILDREN TO BOARDING SCHOOLS. THIS EFFECTIVLY WOULD SEVER THEM FROM THIER CULTURE & FAMILY GROUPS THAT ARE SO NEEDED, FOR THEM TO GROW INTO HEALTHY ADULTS. THIS BILL IS A BACKDOOR WAY OF IMPOSING TERMINATION & ASSIMILATION POLICY TO NATIVE ALASKANS. IT IS DEPLORABLE, AND MAKES ME ASHAMED TO BE ALASKAN.

SIGNED:

Amy Galloway
 Testifier
Amy Galloway

Representing
BDX 56464 NORTH POLE AK 99705 488-1964
 Address / Phone Number

PLEASE VOTE NO.



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House Hess Committee
 Committee on SB36 / Public School Funds Dated 04-01-98
Committee Name
Bill / Subject

I believe that the shift of funds that will arise out of SB36 is inherently wrong. While the Federal government has learned the danger of forcing Alaska Native children to attend boarding schools, it seems that the State of Alaska wants to willfully make the same mistake. The bill also does not account for the fact that most of Alaska's revenue is derived from rural areas, which relegates the urban areas to little more than support centers for the real industry of Alaska. An apt analogy might be where I took the money out of your pocket, and then bemoaned the cost of educating your children.

SIGNED:

Donald R. Head
 Testifier

myself

Representing

P.O. Box 73148, FPKS, AK 99707 479-8678
 Address / Phone Number

RE:SENATE BILL 36

FROM: The heart of every rural mother

TITLE: THE AFTERMATH

Listen children, carefully,
to what I have to say.
The big people in government
say you have to go away.

You'll cry no tears of loneliness
to show that you are weak.
You'll be strong and carry on,
be proud, and willing, yet meek.

I am not sure how we will do
in being so far apart.
But remember we are with you
in soul, in mind, in heart.

In answer to your questions, children,
I simply do not know,
who will help us hunt for moose
in winters' bitter snows.

I do not know how you will learn
your grandmothers basket weaving ways
before her eyes no longer see
and she passes away.

I cannot tell you why it is
that this Bill, it came to be,
that says we cannot school you here,
where you can come home everyday to me.

If these lawmakers had God in their hearts,
they'd have sang a different song.
For a State united by all walks of life
is a State that's true and strong.

So come on children, heads up high,
let's have a family embrace.
Hold each other tightly enough
to last through the time you're away.

And don't look down upon those who
have torn apart our family faith.
They know not the error of their ways
until it is too late.

3111 Briarcliff Dr.
Anchorage, Alaska 99508
March 31, 1998

Representative Con Bunde, Chair
House HESS Committee

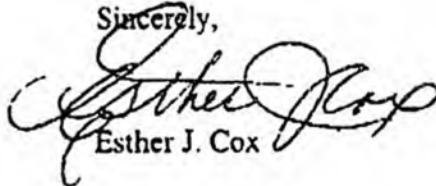
Dear Representative Bunde:

The rewrite of the School Foundation Formula is long overdue. Of course I see this necessity from the aspect of Anchorage, but the fact of the matter is that funding must be more equitably distributed throughout this state. I think that it is interesting that even though Anchorage has 40% of the students in the State of Alaska, the Anchorage School Board is not asking for an increase in funding to 40%. I believe that our Board is much more generous than I! Most certainly, Anchorage should have an increase in state funding based solely on the number of students enrolled in the Anchorage School District.

I firmly believe that the ASD should not be bonding for maintenance, but unless it has the increase in the foundation formula, it is impossible to maintain the quality program and maintain the physical plants. As you well know, the dollars only stretch so far.

Thank you for giving this your full attention.

Sincerely,



Esther J. Cox

**A Resolution of the Alaska Conference of Mayors and
the Alaska Municipal League Board of Directors**

**URGING THE GOVERNOR AND LEGISLATURE TO REACH AN
ACCEPTABLE COMPROMISE ON EDUCATION FUNDING THAT
INCREASES OR PRESERVES EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR
ALL STUDENTS**

WHEREAS, the people of Alaska, specifically the students, need the **Governor and Legislature to achieve an acceptable plan for school funding**; and

WHEREAS, the AML/ACoM conducted a statewide education funding survey that received responses by municipal leaders representing over 80% of the population. **It gives clear guidance from the Alaskans who work with students and the public every day on the implementation and funding of education.** (This survey was distributed to all legislators and the administration); and

WHEREAS, over the past ten years, the state has not increased state per student funding to offset increased operating costs. While the state has increased funding for increased number of students and some special education programs, **the impact on local taxpayers has been an average doubling of local property taxes for schools**; and

WHEREAS, SB 36 actually proposes a significant decrease in per student (ADM) funding for some school districts; and

WHEREAS, this year, due to increases in Assessed Property Tax Values, the state mandated local taxpayer contribution to the state for education increased by \$9 million. Despite this windfall to the state paid by local taxpayers, local taxpayers will see no benefit from their \$9 million increased contribution unless the state increases the per student state allocation for schools; and

WHEREAS, the McDowell "Alaska School Operating Cost Study" recommends "a transition period to insure that no district receives less than its current allocation." SB 36 provides only a two-year transition in most districts and no transition for some.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, any changes in the education funding formula should:

1. Add \$18 million of funding to recognize the lack of inflation adjustment for the last eight years, for an estimated total appropriation for education of \$678 million.
2. Include an analysis of educational adequacy for all districts, with no district receiving less than their FY 98 funding for the first two years. Any funding adjustments resulting from this analysis should be accomplished over a five-year transition period.

3. Implement an annual funding adjustment process to offset necessary increases in the cost of educating children.
4. Accept the 20% average distribution for categorical funding proposed in SB 36 (while continuing to fund intensive needs separately) but add a waiver process to the state Board of Education for additional district funding based on statewide standards and documentation of need.
5. Include provisions that establish measurable goals and standards to ensure education excellence.
6. Encourage the Legislature, which is mandated by the Alaska Constitution to act as the Assembly for the Unorganized Borough, to consider the question of equitable taxation for schools in the Unorganized areas of the state. Designated as a borough by the Constitution, the Unorganized Borough should generally not be treated differently than any other borough on the question of taxation for schools.
7. Add a factor which equalizes school funding based upon local assessed valuation per pupil.



217 Second Street, Suite 200 ■ Juneau, Alaska 99801 ■ Tel (907)586-1325, Fax (907)-463-5480

State's Constitutional Mandate to Fund and Maintain Public Schools

WHAT THE ALASKA CONSTITUTION SAYS:

Article VII of the Alaska Constitution states:

“PUBLIC EDUCATION. The legislature shall by general law establish and maintain a system of public schools open to all children of the state, and may provide for other public educational institutions.”

WHAT THE ALASKA SUPREME COURT SAYS:

In MacCauley V Hildebrand (1971) the Alaska Supreme Court states:

“The constitutional mandate for pervasive state authority in the field of education could not be more clear. First, the language is mandatory, not permissive. Second, the section not only requires that the legislature “establish” a school system, but also gives to that body the continuing obligation to “maintain” the system (*6). Finally, the provision is unqualified: **no other unit of government shares responsibility or authority.**” (emphasis added)

(*6) (footnote to opinion:) The state supplies a minimum of 90% of school operating funds. AS 14.17.021 (e) (5).

(Note: In its 1/31/97 decision in Mat-Su Borough School District V State of Alaska, the Alaska Supreme Court referenced its statement in MacCauley V Hildebrand.)

Discussion

Over the years, more and more of the state's constitutional mandate for statewide funding of education has been transferred to local governments and taxpayers.

To comply with the constitutional mandate, a school funding formula bill must:

- ❖ clearly define a reasonable “basic need” funding level for Alaska's schools that ensures adequate education opportunities throughout Alaska;
- ❖ provide a process for adjusting “basic need” funding periodically for reasonable cost increases; and
- ❖ clearly define minimum and maximum local funding tax contribution for schools.

SB

36

File 2



ALASKA MINERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

501 W. Northern Lights Blvd., Suite 203, Anchorage, Alaska 99503 FAX: (907) 278-7887 Telephone: (907) 276-0347

March 3, 1998

Honorable Druc Pearce
Honorable Bert Sharp
Co-Chairmen, Senate Finance Committee
Capitol Building
Juneau, AK 99801

RE: Senate Bill 36, School Funding and Taxation of the Unorganized Borough

Dear Senator Pearce and Senator Sharp,

We have been following the several bills dealing with the issues of school funding and taxation of the unorganized borough. Many Alaskans are frustrated over what they feel are inequities in the funding of schools and other government services. These frustrations exist in both the urban areas and in the rural or bush areas. Both groups feel they are being treated unfairly. Our purpose in this letter is not to argue either side but rather to provide you with some factors to consider as you deliberate these issues and to raise our concern that in many areas of the State, the equipment at the few scattered mines may be the only readily identifiable taxable entity.

The following are some of the factors that we feel need to be considered:

- Many areas of the State have very little in the way of personal or business property that could be taxed.
- It is very costly to build a home or business property in the bush. A home that would be appraised at \$60,000 in an urban area could easily cost 2.5 times that amount or more in the bush. Appraising and determining a taxable value of such remote property is very difficult.
- In many areas of the state the only readily identifiable taxable buildings, facilities and equipment are the mines, private aircraft and lodges. And there are very few these mines - less than 150 small placer mines operate in the state in any given year and most of these are in the Fairbanks area.
- Mining is not opposed to paying reasonable taxes but these must be consistently and fairly applied to all.
- Increasing or adding new taxes on facilities and equipment in the bush will provide a disincentive for future investment. Exploration and mining in bush areas that are not on the road system already carry a tremendous added cost burden. The lack of roads, power and other infrastructure mean that only deposits with higher ore grades have any chance of ever becoming producing mines.

- The taxes now paid by the different areas of the state vary widely. Anchorage has a property tax but no sales tax. Fairbanks, Juneau, and the Mat-Su Valley have both a property tax and a sales tax. Bethel has a sales tax. Nome has a sales tax, etc.

- However, it can be argued that the bush areas buy almost all of their supplies, equipment and services from the urban areas of Anchorage or Fairbanks.

In addition to the Alaska Miners Association, several mining companies now working in Alaska have been evaluating the several bills now active in the Legislature. As part of their review of the various tax issues, Placer Dome compiled the enclosed table (still in draft) comparing some of the States where they now have operating mines or exploration interest. From this table it appears that taxation in Alaska is now comparable and not significantly lower than other states. The item missing from the table is personal income tax. In addition to Alaska, I believe Montana and Nevada do not have a personal income tax.

Senate Bill 36 proposes to require additional taxes of residents working in the unorganized borough areas and would also reduce state funding for services in these areas. It is not clear whether this would include those who derive revenues from the bush but do not reside there such as construction workers, travel agencies, airline pilots and crew, sales representatives, contract services, etc. If the new tax is only on the income of persons residing in the bush it will be on a relatively small number of people, many of whom would already be considered to be at the poverty level.

We request your careful consideration of the potential problems that the various tax approaches will have on the unorganized borough areas and on the mining industry.

Sincerely,



Steven C. Borell, P.E.
Executive Director

enclosure

cc: President Mike Miller

Placer Dome North America

DRAFT

State Tax Comparison for Mining Operations

	Alaska(1)	Arizona	California	Colorado	Montana	Nevada
Corp. Income Tax	9.40%	9%	8.84%	5%	6.75%-7%	n/a
Property Tax	0-3%	Yes	1% Assessed Value	Yes	Yes	2.59% assessed value
Mining Tax/Royalty	7% of income plus 3% if State lands	2.5% Net Severance	n/a	2.5% Income >\$11 million	1.0% of sales plus 0.5% of gross value	2-5% net proceeds(2)
Sales/Use Tax	0-6%	5%	0.25-7.25%	3%	n/a	5.75-6%

(1) Upto \$20 million tax credit for project specific exploration expenditures that can be taken against taxes due once in operation.
Credit applies to corp. income tax, mining license tax and, if on State owned land, State royalty.

(2) 40% distributed to County education needs and 60% to State general fund

Gary and Dianna Hawn
3619 Chaffee Circle
Anchorage, AK 99517-2310
(907) 248-9033

March 4, 1998

Senator Bert Sharp
Alaska State Legislature
State Capital (MS3100)
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Senator Sharp,

I am writing you to ask for your attention on a school funding issue. I know you want to help with such an important topic as our schools. My child is currently enrolled in the Alyeska Central School based there in Juneau. It is a correspondence school serving students throughout the state of Alaska.

I understand the foundation formula might be changed and I would appreciate if you would consider the following items if these changes are put on the table:

presently Alyeska Central School (ACS) counts all students as elementary, regardless if they are elementary or secondary. As more than half the students enrolled are secondary, this will mean a loss of enormous educational dollars. The secondary students require additional support and more complex services.

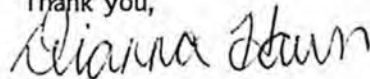
presently ACS is not granted a second student count during the school session as other schools are. ACS must turn in their student count at the end of October. As ACS has an open enrollment this puts the school at a major disadvantage when accepting new students after the October cut off. As with any other school, the student population grows throughout the school year .

presently also an issue is the support for students needs in the technology area. The school can offer renovated surplus state computers to the students when available. Again, as in other schools this area is of great concern to the students and parents. The school needs additional funding to offer more support and courses.


The above mentioned points, in addition to being funded at only 65% of the funding formula, is not equal treatment that our students should be receiving.

My son was a student who was "falling between the cracks" in public schooling for 8 years because his test scores weren't low enough to warrant any help from the school district. As a concerned parent for the one-on-one approach in my son's educational career, I chose ACS as the only possible alternative for him. Please don't take that away from my son or myself.

Thank you,



Gary and Dianna Hawn



March 4, 1997

Senator Bert Sharp, Co-Chair
Senate Finance Committee
Senate
State Capitol, Room 516
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Senator Sharp:

I strongly encourage you to support SB 266 / HB 369 which funds the State Children's Health Insurance Program by expanding Medicaid coverage for children up to 200% of the federal poverty level.

This program will provide health coverage for the 11,600 uninsured children who are in families below 200% of the poverty level. These children are six times more likely to go without needed care, five times more likely to use the emergency room and four times more likely to have urgent care delayed. Untreated or undiagnosed health problems in children

Spending \$7 million on children's health will leverage \$18 million in federal dollars for the program. To prosper economically, Alaska needs healthy productive citizens. An investment in children's health is an investment in our future.

It's the right thing to do.

Thanks for all of your work on behalf of Alaska.

Sincerely,



Marilyn Walsh Kasmar, RNC, MBA
2608 Nathaniel Court
Anchorage, AK 99517



ASD Legislative Priority: Foundation Formula Rewrite

Reducing Class Size/Impact of Various Percentage
Increases to ASD Portion of Statewide Funding

ASD LEGISLATIVE PRIORITY

Rewrite the School Foundation Program formula to provide greater equity of funding for Anchorage School District students. Class size reduction is seen by the Board as the number one priority for use of any additional Foundation Formula Money Received.

Cost of Reducing Class Size by One Student

Using the current FY 1998-99 projected enrollment excluding the Charter Schools and Special Education, the approximate number of teachers and the approximate associated cost for reducing class size districtwide by one student for the following scenarios are:

K-12	66 FTE	\$3,102,000
K-2	13 FTE	\$ 611,000
K-3	20 FTE	\$ 940,000

Impact of Various Percentage Increases to ASD Portion of Statewide Funding Based on FY 98-99 Projections Provided By Department of Education

Any new funding formula should distribute funds more equitably statewide. For the Anchorage School District, the difference between our percentage of students statewide, thirty-eight percent, to our percentage of State funding, thirty percent, should be significantly narrowed.

Additional 1% Increase	\$ 6,347,732
Additional 2% Increase	\$12,696,084
Additional 3% Increase	\$19,044,437
Additional 4% Increase	\$25,392,789
Additional 5% Increase	\$31,741,141
Additional 6% Increase	\$38,089,494
Additional 7% Increase	\$44,437,846

Alaska's School Funding Formula

February 3, 1998

As a mother of three children in the Anchorage School District I pay attention to what's going on regarding education in Alaska.

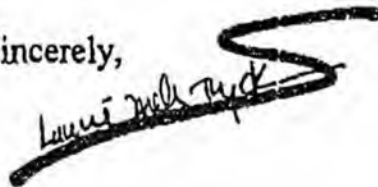
The present system of funding public education in Alaska is ridiculous. The gross inequities between our schools must be changed. The continued junkets allowed throughout our state are deplorable.

Instead of protecting incompetence and redundancy how about trying to fix it? If you listen to the "Educrats" all the time you'd tend to believe them. More money, more money.... Whew! It's time to audit what is going on and cut the fat. You need a "swat team" to reform education spending. While serving on Anchorage School District Budget Review Team last fall every time a suggestion on reducing the administration overhead or payroll came up, all I heard was... "You can't touch that, it's a union contract." Why was I there? The meetings were stacked with Anchorage School District cronies. It was a complete waste of my time.

Increasing Alaska's Education Budget is a waste of our money until the Alaska School funding formula is changed. We must hold our school districts accountable academically and financially. Alaska's schools need more help than money.

Please recognize my concerns as you address this very important issue.

Sincerely,



Laurie Miller Tryck
Girdwood, Alaska

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT



Anchorage School Board

P.O. Box 196614, Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6614 • (907) 333-9561

Debbie Ossiander, President
P. O. Box 670772, Chugiak, Alaska 99567
(907) 688-2308; Fax (907) 688-2309
E-mail: Ossiander_Debbie@msmail.asd.k12.ak.us

To the Senate Finance Committee:

My name is Debbie Ossiander, I am currently serving as the president of the Anchorage School Board and I'm speaking to you this evening on its behalf. We consider a rewrite of the current foundation formula vital and have made that our number one legislative priority. We believe that the larger districts throughout the state receive inadequate and inequitable funding. We have met with school board members from Fairbanks, Mat-Su, Kenai and Juneau and they share our concerns. Our district and others throughout the state are struggling to cope with continued growth, inflation of fixed costs and an increase in the number and size of federal and state unfunded mandates for services.

I have some general concerns I'd like to share with you as you examine school funding this session. Our school board believes there are increased costs to providing a quality education program in rural Alaska, but not to the extent of the current disparity in funding. We believe the foundation should face periodic review and adjustments to cover cost increases. We all need recognition and reimbursement for the continuing costs of inflation. We also believe all districts, including REA As, should be required to make some contribution toward the cost of their children's education. We would like to see funding follow mandated services such as the Quality School Initiatives, charter schools, mandated testing and changing special education requirements. We would like to see the formula simplified and paperwork requirements reduced, but please continue to allow for adjustments with proper justification and documentation. The districts in our state are very different, we need some flexibility for district options, such as moving sixth graders into middle school programs. Pupil transportation reimbursement is vital for us. We would like to see it kept separate from the foundation and be equitable for both contracted and district provided services. We welcome the work being done to examine the area cost differential

and believe there are costs specific to urban districts that must be acknowledged. We see some benefit to eliminating Federal Impact Aid as a component in the formula; this could remove the challenge the state has faced in meeting the federal disparity test. and finally changing the student count date for subsequent year's projections to after the student count period for the current year would be helpful and allow for more accurate projections.

Thank you for the opportunity to address you. Please forge ahead with this important work.

Debbi Ossander

688-2308

fax 688-2319



STATE OF ALASKA
LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS AGENCY
DIVISION OF PUBLIC SERVICES

BARROW LEGISLATIVE OFFICE

BOX 830, BARROW, ALASKA 99723

(907) 852-7111 - office; 852-7114 - fax

DATE: February 28 1998

Please accept the enclosed original(s) of written testimony
for the CSSB 36 teleconference hearing that was
scheduled on February 28, 1998.

A copy of this testimony was transmitted to your committee via
fax on February 28, 1998

Thank you,

Aindy Epperson



Alaska State Legislature

Senate Finance
~~CSSB 36~~

Please enter into the record my testimony to the _____

committee name

committee on CSSB 36, dated 2/28/98
bill/subject

please see attached sheets. 3 pages.

Signed: Adeline R Haysom
Testifier
Barrow School Advisory Council + Self
Representing (Optional)
PO Box 172 Barrow, Ak 99723
Address
907 852 5025 Fax 852 2601
Phone No.

Adeline R. Hopson
Box 172
Barrow, Alaska 99723

COMMENTS TO THE ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Senate Finance Committee Re CSSB 36

**Saturday, February 28, 1998
via Teleconference from Barrow**

INTRODUCTION:

Goodmorning Ladies and gentlemen, my name is Adeline R. Hopson, firstly, I am a mother of children attending the North Slope Borough Schools in Barrow, and a grandmother of two grandchildren who also attend the same schools. I am also a grandmother of 3 who attend school in Unalakleet in the Bering Straits School District REAA. I am appalled that even the Bering Straits School District REAA would get cuts, especially when they do not even have a tax base.

I am currently President of the Barrow School Advisory Council.

COMMENTS on present DRAFT form on the McDowell Study:

My comments are in review of CSSB 36 in its present DRAFT form and the McDowell study.

Funding is allocated per student vs. instructional unit - SIMPLE - not so rather it is lengthy and complex, especially to the everyday common folk. It may become workable BUT not without more work AND additional dollars (\$\$\$\$\$)

I'd like to talk about EQUITY.....in whose eyes????.....determined by WHAT????

How admirable a goal? But when other things are UNEQUAL such as:

**Roads
Basic Services
Homes
Water & Sewer still being built and funded with GOB on the North Slope
Homes
Health care delivery services
and the list goes on and on.....**

How can you place an exact, arbitrary and biased figure on the head of each child?????

Do you as parents treat each child the same??? Do you spend the SAME EXACT amount on

each of them??

Specifically within the McDowell study, I would note that the numbers used in good faith are necessarily reflective of many years of erosion of dollars and programs. I suspect had the dollars been adequate during that time, many items would come out different.

The issue of salaries is just one of the areas that has been adversely affected thru inadequate funding. To assume that salaries are somewhat uniform is true WHEN you look only at NUMBERS. I would suspect salaries would be different had funding been adequate. Each District has had to stabilize those costs thru negotiated roll-backs, two-tier salary scales, and loss of benefits.

ON THE SLOPE, OUR LABOR FORCE MUST COMPETE WITH LOCAL SALARIES, PARTICULARLY AT THE BOROUGH, THE ARCTIC SLOPE REGIONAL CORPORATION AND ONGOING CONSTRUCTION WAGES. We necessarily try to attract the best and the brightest in the School District. To say that salaries compare to salaries in ANCHORAGE is NOT TRUE!!! Our cost of living on the North Slope is the highest in the Nation, although today, our local businesses are trying to compete with the Cosco's, the Sams Clubs, KMART's and the Walmarts of Anchorage. We do millions of dollars worth of business with those stores in Anchorage and Fairbanks to make our dollars stretch and to be able to pay for our utility costs, high mortgage and rentals.

The McDowell study on P. 10, 31, and 32 and maybe other pages puts school administration under the instructional allocation. WHY then does CSSB 36 in its present form continue to hold to the \$950 pupil for general District administration??? Maybe this number has simply not been adjusted.

The McDowell study on P. 48 has a chart that is not a true picture. Unknowingly perhaps they are comparing numbers which need further explanation. On the Slope for instance the student population is K - 12, yet the staffing is reflective of the inclusion of the ECE (Early Childhood Education) personnel.

The disclaimers throughout the study are numerous and it would appear that the framers of CSSB 36 have not yet taken many of those into consideration. Additionally, it speaks to more money and Hold Harmless.

Just as a reminder, I grew up in BIA operated schools all the way thru high school. At that time, the State would not educate us, even if we were citizens and voters of the State. For food, students were fed frozen fish every morning when they went to school, to insure that every child had a nutritious meal before starting the education process. We were punished for speaking our own native tongue while in school. Our libraries and reading materials were limited. Yet, we have grown to be leaders, because our parents helped us, and wanted us to be educated and compete in the Western culture.

Lastly, the State of Alaska receives ALL its revenues from Rural Alaska. I am worried for my grandchild who has been asked to compete in the John Hopkins University for the special gifted child. She's in the 7th grade attending the Unalakleet Schools, she has goals to become a Doctor or a Lawyer. From Rural Alaska we recognize our children, encourage them to set goals and become productive citizens of our State we are so proud of. Yet we have those in the State Legislature who want to make us Second Class Citizens.

Thank you for this opportunity to make my comments. Please take a look at the inequities, and presumed numbers, BE REALISTIC. Visit our schools, see the small gyms that are used both for cafeteria's and gyms. We are voters too.



ADELINE R. HOPSON
BARROW & Bering Strait Constituent



STATE OF ALASKA
LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS AGENCY
DIVISION OF PUBLIC SERVICES

BARROW LEGISLATIVE OFFICE

BOX 830, BARROW, ALASKA 99723

(907) 852-7111 - office; 852-7114 - fax

DATE: February 27, 1998

Please accept the enclosed original(s) of written testimony
for the CSSB 36 teleconference hearing that was
scheduled on February 27, 1998.

A copy of this testimony was transmitted to your committee via
fax on February 28, 1998.

Thank you,

Cindy Epperson



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the Senate Finance
committee name
committee on CSSB 36, dated 2/27/98
bill/subject

please see attached sheets. - 5 pages.

Signed: *Tom D. Jirob*
Testifier
City of Barrow
Representing (Optional)
P.O. Box 385 Barrow AK, 99568
Address
1-907-852-3393
Phone No.

SB 36
2/27/98

For the record, my name Tom Nicolos, I am the parent of three children in the NSB School system, a member of the Barrow City Council, and a member of the Alaska Municipal League legislative sub committee on Education and Local Government.

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony on behalf of my children, the children of my constituents, and the children in many of the rural areas around the State that will be impacted by SB 36.

I would like to start out by telling you that I am impressed with the quality of education currently provided by the NSB School District. An example of the quality of education currently provided to the children of the North Slope can be measured by the standardized testing required by the State. My oldest daughter has consistently received high scores on her standardized tests; in fact she was above the 97% mark in all of the tested areas on her last CAT scores. Currently it my understanding that the NSB provides 2 out of every 3 dollars spent on education here on the North Slope. This shows, I believe, that the North Slope Borough is committed to providing the best education possible to the children on the North Slope.

Tom Nicolos

①

Throughout my involvement in this controversial topic, several points continue to come to the forefront:

The legislature is mandated by the Constitution to provide education to all of the children in the State.

The major problem is not with the disbursement of funds, but rather the lack of funds due to the Legislature's inability to keep pace with inflation!

(No inflation? Why are we spending almost one billion dollars per year to inflation-proof the permanent fund?)

Redistributing money from one school district to another is not an acceptable way to deal with the problem. This is not enough money to really help the urban schools; but it is enough to devastate the affected rural schools.

The North Slope Borough, like most every other municipality in the State, is faced with declining revenues, as the North Slope Borough proceeds

Tom Nicolas

(2)

with projects to provide basic services such as water and sewer to its residents.

The arbitrary 11.5 million-dollar cut proposed would be devastating to the North Slope. The money is simply not available to make up for the loss of funds as set out in this Bill. I have suffered through attacks made by at least one Senator against the North Slope in efforts to promote this Bill by spreading false information. To promote the stealing funds of from the North Slope, the Senator stood before an audience and informed them that the North Slope had so much money that they built a 120 million-dollar swimming pool. The fact is, the sole reason our "huge" 17-½ meter swimming pool exists is that it serves as a reservoir for the fire suppression system for our high school. The total cost for construction of the entire high school facility was less than 80 million dollars when it was built nearly 17 years ago. It is time to stop bashing the North Slope and look for reasonable solutions to deal with this problem which does not continue to pit urban areas against rural areas.

In closing I would like to read into the record a resolution passed by The City of Barrow regarding Education Foundation funding:

Tom Nicolas

(3)



CITY OF BARROW

"farthest north incorporated city"

RESOLUTION 24-96

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BARROW, ALASKA SUPPORTING THE NORTH SLOPE BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT WITH FOUNDATION FUNDING

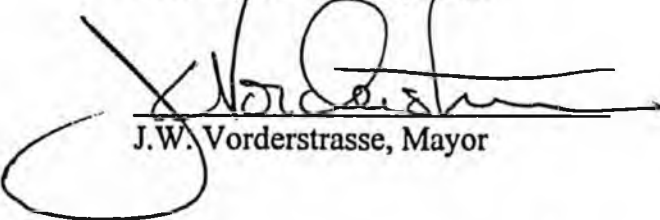
WHEREAS, the State of Alaska provides about \$10,300,000 in annual support for education of the North Slope Borough School District.

WHEREAS, we the members of the City Council of the City of Barrow, Alaska, strongly oppose any reduction to our already inadequate educational funding from the State of Alaska. We are especially opposed to any legislation that would change the Foundation Funding formula and require the North Slope Borough to provide financial support to the rest of the state; and

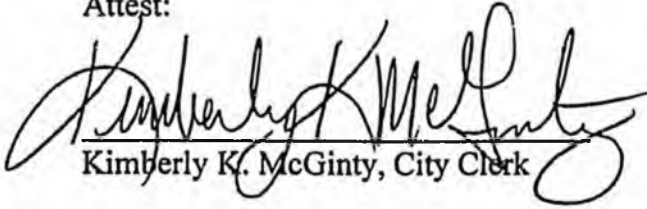
WHEREAS, be it resolved that the City Council is strongly opposed to action by the legislature that would reduce Foundation Funding from current levels to the North Slope Borough School District.

THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of Barrow, Alaska supports the North Slope Borough School District in their request to the Legislature for no reduction in funding.

PASSED and approved by the City Council of the City of Barrow, Alaska on this 24th day of October, 1996.


J.W. Vorderstrasse, Mayor

Attest:


Kimberly K. McGinty, City Clerk



Tom Nicolas

(4)

Thank you once again for this opportunity to testify before you.

Tom Nicolas

⑤



STATE OF ALASKA
LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS AGENCY
DIVISION OF PUBLIC SERVICES

BARROW LEGISLATIVE OFFICE

BOX 830, BARROW, ALASKA 99723

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Thank you,

Cindy Epperson



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the Senate Finance
committee name
 committee on CSSB 36, dated 2/28/98
bill/subject

please see attached sheets - 24 pages.

Signed: Charles J. Mason
Testifier

NSBSD

Representing (Optional)
Box 169, Barrow, AK 99723

Address
907-852-5311

Phone No.

from: Charles F. Mason
NSBSD
Box 169
Barrow, AK
99723

State of Alaska Legislature
Working Hard to Keep Their "F"

No doubt that you are aware of the current status of the grade education received from Education Week, January 1998, Quality Counts publication. For those who read the document, you can review the grades awarded. Please, read the fine print - the "F" does not go to District administration, DOE, students or teachers. The "F" falls directly in the lap of the Legislature. But please read completely through ALL the criteria as to how final grades were awarded. Don't stop reading with the first couple of remarks about per pupil expenditures. Read all the way through.

Of importance to note is the factor requiring a percentage of effort in instructional expenditures. Note that the researchers report the following:

1. The U.S. average is 62% (rounded) of current expense;
2. New York (top in the nation) is at nearly 68% and 70% became the benchmark. No state received an A. (Why, then, does the McDowell study indicate 79% and CSSB 36 show 70%?)

Also provided in the Education Week (<http://www.edweek.org>) survey are data tables that show how the states rate on allocation/equity/adequacy.

Alaska falls in the middle....average on adequacy. Then on equity/allocation, Alaska falls at or near the bottom. Here it is interesting to note that the state with the second-highest combined ranking in those two areas is North Carolina (80). It scores only slightly above Alaska (79) in adequacy. Figuring in inflation adjusted

figures and the percentage of taxable resources spent on education, Alaska falls to 60 as an overall score.

The Majority insists on a per pupil expenditure as the answer to our ills. You are wrong! All per pupil does is add more money to the more populous districts, without regard to rhyme and reason and does not allow for economy of scale. You espouse "equity;" however, when NOTHING else is equal (roads, homes, access to services, etc., etc.), that amounts to the "equal treatment of unequals" which is inherently unfair. Do parents treat each child absolutely equal, or do they adjust for individual differences?

The North Carolina formula, developed during the Depression (when districts went bust) and exercised over 60 years, "appears" to meet the test. It is very important to note that this formula ties ADM to staffing formulas that have been developed and modified over the years. Of importance is the fact that it does not tie dollars to per pupil expenditures. That is simply done after the fact. Although the state has 100 counties, there are approximately 140 school districts; some of which are small city units. It is also important to note that there is a statewide salary scale and it matters NOT whether a District hires at the top or bottom. Each unit is limited to a maximum 5% supplement over salary (a disparity test from rich to poor). Local units do have the flexibility to hire additional staff with local money.

Further examination of this formula reveals several ^{distinct} parallels to the existing Alaska formula. True, both are complex; but the general public in North Carolina doesn't get concerned because the North Carolina Legislature has opted to

make education a priority, fund adequately, and routinely adjust for inflation.

Alaska fails primarily because of the failure of Legislature to adjust the extrapolated per pupil expenditure amounts for inflation. Please see the charts. All CSSB 36 does is rearrange the deck chairs on the Titanic. The Senator from Eagle River has likened CSSB 36 to rearranging the furniture in a house...one room having had most of the furniture; it would be redistributed throughout. Someone should point out the house is engulfed in flames. Many are trying to send that message. Without new money...a continued. "F." The Majority "appears" to be concerned with the percentage of taxable dollars spent on education and, in particular, where those dollars may be garnered. I understand your plight; however your "fix" is short-sighted. The property valuation of the perceived "Golden Goose" will decline dramatically over the next few years. The "footprint" for new sites will not be as large as was required of our older sites and the valuation would go down.

Additionally, the bonded indebtedness the North Slope Borough faces for having tackled our own local capital improvement plan without the help of the State, precludes the "perceived" ability to pay.

Where will you go next? What scheme will be devised? Why not apply a workable solution? Again, looking at those states that receive high marks, several of those have revenue sources other than a tax on real property. There are such things as general sales taxes and/or income tax AND this State does have money in the bank(s).

On the issue of equity as seen in the report, please note several states did not receive a rating. While Alaska shows a perceived a poor rating in that area, I would respectfully request that the folks from Education Week and the Legislature lay a map of Alaska over a map of the Lower-48. The immenseness of this state covers the area of many states AND I would suggest that the "disparity" between Vermont or Connecticut vs. Arkansas would be no greater than that within Alaska.

In Alaska, the formula allocates dollars and the local education agency lives within the budget...a bit more local control. It now appears that the legislative majority would usurp local control and, as long as education expenditures are in line with General Bullmoose's perspectives, they are A-OK.

Please go on to note that inadequacy of buildings also figure into the equation and, without significant amounts of money poured in, Alaska keeps an "F."

In North Carolina, funds for buildings come largely from floating bonds and each district is awarded money on a needs criterion. There, local dollars from property taxes can be added to enhance facilities, but basic and adequate structures are provided largely through state efforts.

Here in Alaska, we are struggling with how/where to provide dollars to districts and it appears that the Legislature is pointed headlong into a per pupil "fix" and another "F" from Education Week because many of the individuals can't see the forest for the trees.

Why don't we choose to follow the path to something which works and that is viable? Most of the states at the top of the list have formulas in place. Check the

states with strictly per pupil expenditures for determining dollars and there is a trail of litigation based on "rich" vs. "poor" or the "equal treatment of unequals."

It is time to hear us...the house is ON FIRE!

H:\un\speeches\workinghard.doc

EDUCATION WEEK



Overview

U.S. Report Card

The Indicators

How To Order

Index

Resources

THE INDICATORS

States receive separate grades for adequacy, equity, and allocation of resources, and the indicators in each category are weighted equally.

Adequacy of Resources. 1. Per-pupil expenditure, adjusted. Because this figure has been adjusted to reflect differences in education costs from state to state, it can be used for purposes of comparison. Although higher spending does not necessarily correlate with higher quality, studies show that instructional expenditures are positively related to student achievement. Wealthier districts tend to spend more on education, and when all else is held constant, districts with lower spending have lower test scores. States were graded on the

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Teacher Magazine!



~~with lower spending have lower test scores. States were graded on the level of expenditure with \$7,000 and above receiving an A, or 100%; \$6,000-\$6,999 receiving a B, or 85%; \$5,000-\$5,999 receiving a C, or 75%; \$4,000-\$4,999 receiving a D, or 65%; and below \$4,000 receiving an F, or 50%.~~

2. Change in inflation-adjusted per-pupil expenditure, 1985-95. We included this indicator as a measure of a state's commitment to ensure that education spending at least keeps pace with inflation. Virtually every state has proclaimed that it wants to improve its schools and increase student achievement. That would be hard to do if schools lose purchasing power to inflation. Just keeping up with inflation is not enough when greater demands are being made on the system, as is now the case. In our survey, 94% of teachers, 92% of principals, and 78% of superintendents agree that states and districts should be required to increase expenditures for education at least at the rate of inflation. States that increased education expenditures by 20% or more beyond inflation got an A, or 100%; those that increased 15% to 19% got a B, or 85%; those that increased from 10% to 14% got a C, or 75%; those that increased 5% to 9% got a D, or 65%; and those that did not increase expenditures by at least 5% got an F, or 50%.

3. Relative fiscal effort. How much states spend on education is a matter of both how affluent they are and how willing they are to spend for schools. Some wealthier states don't spend as high a percentage of their income on schools as poorer states do. We included this indicator to measure "effort." The GAO has developed an index that measures each state's relative spending compared with its unique economic circumstances. For ease of use, we converted that index into percentages. The percentages were then used in calculating the states' final scores.

Allocation of Resources. *4. Percent of expenditures spent on instruction.* "Instruction" includes salaries of teachers and instructional supplies. A state could increase instructional expenditures by hiring more teachers, raising teacher salaries, or spending more on supplies. There is a correlation between increased spending on classroom instruction and increased student achievement. In our survey, 85% of teachers, 66% of principals, and 69% of superintendents agree that states should work to increase the percentage of public school funding that goes for classroom instruction, even if it means reducing spending for administration and special services.

To determine a benchmark for grading states, we considered the percentage spent nationally on instruction and the percentage spent by other developed nations.

The U.S. average for classroom instruction is just over 61% of current expenditures. A number of other industrialized countries spend more than 70%. Considering that New York leads the nation with nearly 68% of its expenditures going for classroom instruction, we deemed 70% to be a fair and reasonable benchmark. Instructional expenditures equaling 70% or more of total current spending earned an A, or 100%; 60% to 69% earned a B, or 85%; 50% to 59% earned a C, or 75%; 40% to 49% earned a D, or 65%; and below 40% earned an F, or 50%.

5. *QED technology measure.* Although many states have made progress in incorporating technology into their education systems, most still have a long way to go. Any effort to assess states on this indicator would necessarily include not only the availability of hardware and software, but also how well integrated it is into the curriculum.

Lacking complete and comparable information of that kind, we relied on an index developed by Henry Becker of the University of California at Irvine for Quality Education Data, a research company in Denver. The index rates states as high-, medium-, or low-tech based on the availability to students and teachers of hardware such as new computers, modems, videodisc players, VCRs, CD-ROMs, and so forth. The index takes into account a number of factors, such as grade level, school enrollment, and district spending. High-tech states received 100%, or an A; medium, 75%, or a C ; and low, 50%, or an F.

6. *Percentage of schools with at least one inadequate building.* A GAO report released last summer concluded that about one-third of the nation's schools, serving about 14 million pupils, need extensive repair or replacement of one or more buildings. About 60% of the schools surveyed reported at least one major building feature in major disrepair, such as heating or plumbing. And half reported at least one unsatisfactory environmental condition such as poor ventilation.

The estimated cost of bringing our education facilities into good condition over the next three years is at least \$112 billion. By any measure, the states have failed to monitor the districts' maintenance needs to provide necessary funding. Only 15 states have monitored the condition of schools on an ongoing basis--and, in some cases, apparently took little or no action to correct what they found.

Experts in physical plant management told us that the benchmark should be 100% of schools in "good" condition, meaning that only routine maintenance or minor repair is needed.

On that basis, every state would have failed. It seemed unreasonable at this point to hold the states to that standard of perfection. Instead, we chose to recognize states that have done better in keeping facilities in decent shape. We used the actual percentages in this column to arrive at a letter grade for each state. States with no schools needing to replace or repair extensively at least one building got 100%, or an A; those with 1% to 10% of schools in need of repair or replacement got 85%, or a B; those with 11% to 20% got 75%, or a C; those with 21% to 30% got 65%, or a D; and those with more than 30% got 50%, or an F.

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Resources are they Adequate, Distributed Equitably, and Focused on Learning?

Adequacy					Allocation			Equity			Additional Information												
State	Grade	Score	Education spending per student, adjusted for differences (1996)	% change in adjusted spending (1996-1994)	Full-time teachers, spend on education (1996)	State	Grade	Score	% of total education expenditure spent on instruction (1995)	State	Grade	Score	Ratio of equity of resources	Ratio of equity of spending per student among states (1994)	State	Value added education spending per student (1994)	Education spending for every \$1,000 in state wealth (gross state product) (1995)	Date gap between districts at 50th and 95th percentiles in state (1994)	Average teacher salary, adjusted for cost of living (1994)	Teachers as percentage of total staff (1993)	Students per full-time computer (1997)	% change in students (1997)	% of total spending that was used for books and materials (1994)
Vermont	101	A	\$6,784	22	5.4	New York	B+	88.0	Hawaii	A'	0.0%	Alabama	\$4,302	\$30.07	\$1,235	\$35,697	63	29	30	30			
New Jersey	100	A	\$8,176	31	4.4	Utah	B	87.3	West Virginia	A-	4.8%	Alaska	\$8,230	\$47.41	\$0,701	\$38,422	49	16	81	45			
West Virginia	07	A	\$6,340	23	5.1	Maine	B	87.1	Delaware	B	6.5%	Illinois	\$4,481	\$38.44	\$4,771	\$32,622	50	28	46	41			
Maine	95	A	\$6,066	24	5.1	Massachusetts	B-	85.9	Florida	B	7.4%	Arkansas	\$3,303	\$39.07	\$1,185	\$34,313	54	27	61	25			
Pennsylvania	93	A	\$6,708	20	4.3	Rhode Island	B-	85.8	North Carolina	B	7.8%	California	\$5,034	\$29.89	\$1,102	\$37,437	52	27	33	43			
Connecticut	92	A-	\$7,082	26	3.9	Vermont	B-	85.3	Iowa	B	8.4%	Colorado	\$5,051	\$34.93	\$2,390	\$35,296	53	20	61	32			
Indiana	91	A-	\$6,059	35	4.4	Tennessee	C+	84.8	South Carolina	B	8.9%	Connecticut	\$8,343	\$38.52	\$2,782	\$41,890	55	22	44	30			
Michigan	89	B+	\$6,438	18	4.7	New Hampshire	C+	84.4	Nevada	B-	9.2%	Delaware	\$6,903	\$25.89	\$1,312	\$39,699	55	14	41	41			
Wisconsin	89	B+	\$8,519	16	4.6	Pennsylvania	C+	84.4	Wisconsin	B-	9.4%	Florida	\$5,270	\$37.24	\$1,210	\$38,406	48	17	81	31			
New Mexico	87	B+	\$5,925	33	4.0	Connecticut	C+	84.1	Washington	B-	9.6%	Georgia	\$5,935	\$35.25	\$1,677	\$37,829	48	18	53	26			
New York	87	B+	\$7,416	13	4.1	Minnesota	C	83.7	Louisiana	B-	9.8%	Wyoming	\$5,131	\$29.71	\$0	\$27,958	62	25	35	21			
Rhode Island	87	B+	\$6,417	17	4.3	Wisconsin	C	83.5	Indiana	C+	10.5%	Idaho	\$4,287	\$41.54	\$3,190	\$32,310	59	17	55	32			
Georgia	86	B	\$8,342	50	3.5	Idaho	C	83.3	Utah	C+	10.8%	Illinois	\$8,267	\$33.76	\$3,766	\$40,456	54	20	44	31			
New Hampshire	85	B	\$5,805	31	3.8	Alabama	C	83.0	Alabama	C+	10.8%	Indiana	\$5,689	\$43.82	\$1,552	\$41,225	48	19	87	29			
Nebraska	85	B	\$8,380	17	4.1	Nebraska	C	82.5	Minnesota	C+	10.8%	Kansas	\$5,481	\$39.97	\$1,747	\$35,879	52	16	70	30			
Ohio	85	B	\$5,729	21	3.8	Mississippi	C	82.3	Oregon	C+	10.9%	Kansas	\$5,384	\$44.21	\$4,548	\$36,536	54	11	71	38			
Illinois	84	B	\$6,067	32	3.4	Montana	C	82.3	Mississippi	C+	10.9%	Kentucky	\$5,245	\$33.99	\$1,451	\$37,723	46	23	67	31			
Kentucky	83	B	\$5,801	64	3.4	North Carolina	C	82.3	Connecticut	C	11.6%	Louisiana	\$4,342	\$33.43	\$1,568	\$30,291	51	38	28	39			
Massachusetts	83	B	\$5,899	23	3.3	Delaware	C	82.2	Texas	C	12.1%	Illinois	\$5,955	\$50.67	\$3,371	\$30,097	62	23	60	38			
Idaho	82	B-	\$4,629	27	4.2	Indiana	C	82.2	Georgia	C	12.2%	Maryland	\$6,115	\$39.70	\$1,320	\$38,269	54	23	42	31			
Iowa	80	B-	\$6,105	13	4.0	Wyoming	C	82.1	Maryland	C	12.3%	Massachusetts	\$7,128	\$33.28	\$3,047	\$35,779	55	23	36	41			
Alabama	79	C+	\$4,764	25	3.6	West Virginia	C	82.0	Virginia	C	12.5%	Michigan	\$6,540	\$46.55	\$2,758	\$51,146	47	20	44	22			
Texas	79	C+	\$5,548	19	3.8	Hawaii	C-	81.9	Rhode Island	C	12.6%	Illinois	\$5,818	\$42.89	\$3,446	\$38,509	63	19	66	39			
Kansas	79	C+	\$5,953	8	4.4	Iowa	C-	81.9	Tennessee	C	13.4%	Mississippi	\$3,948	\$35.38	\$896	\$31,901	48	28	38	29			
North Carolina	78	C+	\$5,349	25	3.0	North Dakota	C-	81.7	Maine	C	13.5%	Missouri	\$4,689	\$35.68	\$2,502	\$35,157	48	18	60	27			
Virginia	78	C+	\$5,787	19	3.4	Georgia	C-	81.6	Pennsylvania	C-	14.5%	Montana	\$5,202	\$48.84	\$10,858	\$31,220	54	19	73	20			
Minnesota	70	C+	\$5,929	9	4.3	Maryland	C-	81.5	Idaho	C-	14.7%	Nebraska	\$5,726	\$40.84	\$8,526	\$35,087	53	13	76	35			
Mississippi	78	C+	\$4,455	23	3.5	South Dakota	C-	81.4	Arizona	C-	14.9%	Nevada	\$4,855	\$29.05	\$6,072	\$37,880	59	28	36	23			
Washington	77	C+	\$5,643	14	3.9	Texas	C-	81.2	Wyoming	D+	15.1%	New Hampshire	\$6,098	\$37.92	\$3,495	\$33,996	63	28	39	38			
Oregon	77	C+	\$5,930	8	4.1	Arkansas	C-	81.1	Nebraska	D+	15.2%	New Jersey	\$9,644	\$43.55	\$4,171	\$39,959	53	18	45	19			
Tennessee	76	C	\$5,255	38	2.8	Colorado	C-	81.0	Michigan	D+	15.5%	New Mexico	\$5,533	\$39.55	\$2,073	\$30,351	48	23	54	30			
Maryland	76	C	\$5,989	9	4.0	Missouri	D+	80.7	Massachusetts	D	16.2%	New York	\$8,442	\$41.49	\$4,247	\$41,591	51	25	46	33			
Florida	75	C	\$5,497	13	3.7	Virginia	D+	80.6	Kansas	D	16.6%	North Carolina	\$4,941	\$30.28	\$1,195	\$33,914	52	28	53	36			
Oklahoma	75	C	\$5,259	14	3.8	Oregon	D+	80.2	Illinois	D	16.7%	North Dakota	\$4,717	\$38.47	\$5,144	\$29,257	54	19	78	23			
South Carolina	74	C	\$5,015	14	3.9	Oklahoma	D+	80.1	North Dakota	D	16.8%	Ohio	\$5,863	\$37.51	\$2,516	\$39,993	55	19	35	38			
Delaware	73	C	\$6,741	14	2.6	New Jersey	D+	80.0	Ohio	D	17.0%	Alabama	\$4,788	\$37.88	\$2,683	\$33,430	47	23	53	31			
Missouri	72	C-	\$4,926	14	3.6	California	D	59.9	New Hampshire	D	17.1%	Oregon	\$5,738	\$41.28	\$6,155	\$39,239	52	23	55	39			
Utah	72	C-	\$3,810	13	4.3	Washington	D	59.9	Montana	D	17.2%	Pennsylvania	\$6,881	\$42.54	\$2,330	\$44,925	53	21	39	21			
North Dakota	67	D+	\$5,412	3	3.8	Illinois	D	59.8	New York	D	17.7%	Rhode Island	\$7,161	\$42.77	\$2,139	\$37,702	64	29	29	28			
Nevada	65	D	\$5,004	6	3.0	Kentucky	D	59.8	Vermont	D-	19.0%	North Carolina	\$4,581	\$39.42	\$1,150	\$35,329	53	25	48	37			
South Dakota	64	D	\$4,943	4	3.6	Michigan	D	59.7	Missouri	F	25.8%	North Dakota	\$4,315	\$38.09	\$2,580	\$29,933	63	21	74	21			
Arizona	62	D-	\$4,515	4	3.6	Louisiana	D	59.6	Alaska	F	30.1%	Alaska	\$4,832	\$28.13	\$1,468	\$37,299	54	22	45	27			
Louisiana	61	D-	\$4,804	2	3.3	Nevada	D	59.5	Arkansas	?	?	Arkansas	\$5,245	\$37.87	\$4,197	\$35,610	52	20	60	27			
Hawaii	60	D-	\$5,145	2	3.0	Ohio	D	59.4	California	?	?	California	\$3,645	\$43.37	\$2,707	\$31,360	54	27	54	34			
Alaska	60	D-	\$6,040	-25	4.7	South Carolina	D	59.1	Colorado	?	?	Colorado	\$8,890	\$54.17	\$4,045	\$36,239	49	25	57	21			
Montana	59	F	\$5,677	-2	4.9	Florida	D	58.0	Kentucky	?	?	Kentucky	\$5,614	\$34.26	\$1,819	\$37,446	54	24	52	27			
Wyoming	54	F	\$6,297	-15	3.8	New Mexico	D	58.0	New Jersey	?	?	New Jersey	\$5,860	\$39.06	\$8,018	\$36,890	51	23	59	44			
Colorado	47	F	\$5,123	-4	3.5	Arizona	D-	57.6	New Mexico	?	?	New Mexico	\$5,742	\$51.48	\$861	\$36,858	55	28	65	42			
Arkansas	43	F	\$3,728	-8	3.9	Kansas	D-	57.8	Oklahoma	?	?	Oklahoma	\$6,247	\$45.67	\$2,546	\$40,322	58	19	63	33			
California	10	F	\$4,448	-1	3.0	Alaska	F	56.3	South Dakota	?	?	South Dakota	\$5,808	\$37.69	\$5,681	\$32,029	51	13	91	24			
U.S.			\$6,787	-10	4.0	U.S.		81.7	U.S.		23	U.S.	\$8,707	\$30.06	\$4,037	\$37,643	62	21	40	33			

EDUCATION WEEK



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The Indicators

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Student Achievement

Data Tables

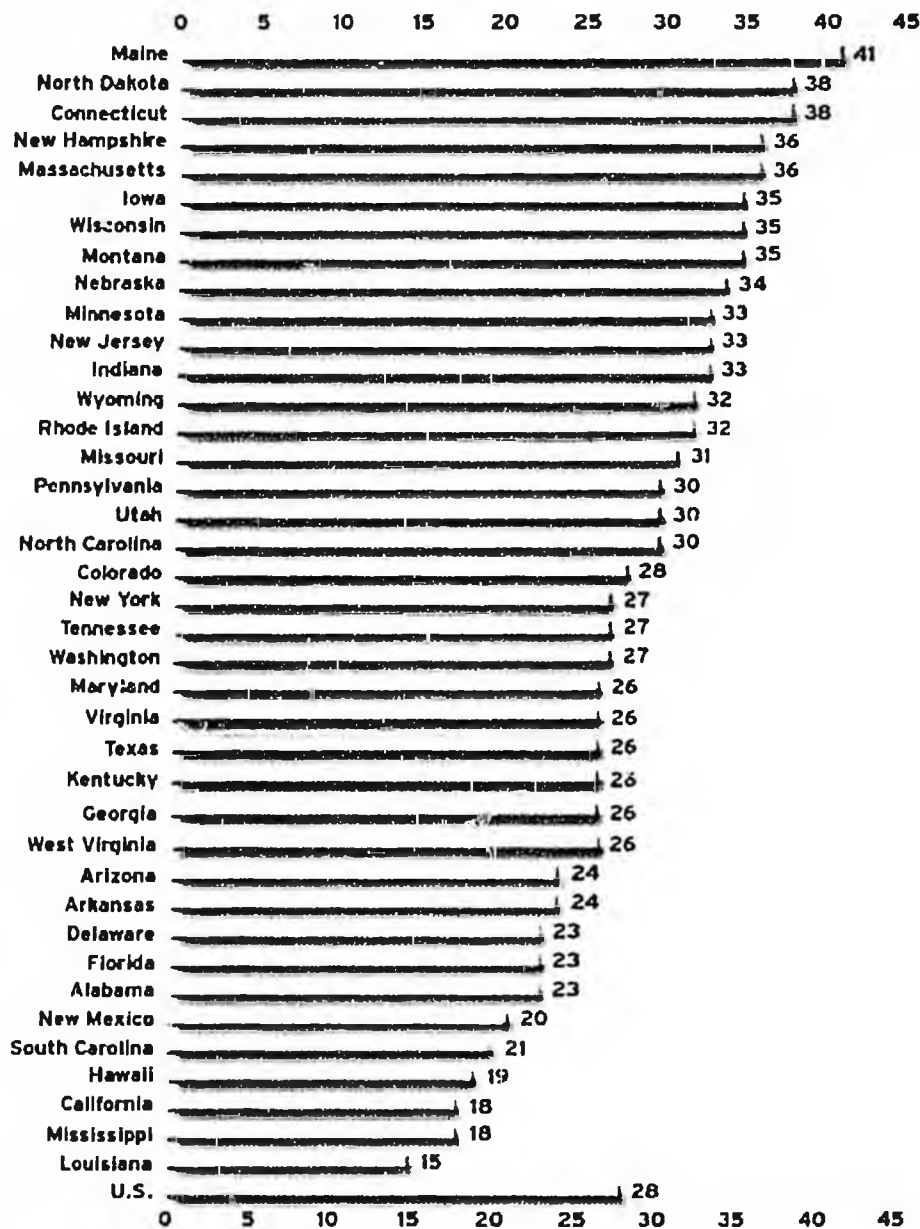
- [Table 1: 4th Grade Scores](#)
- [Table 2: 8th Grade Scores](#)
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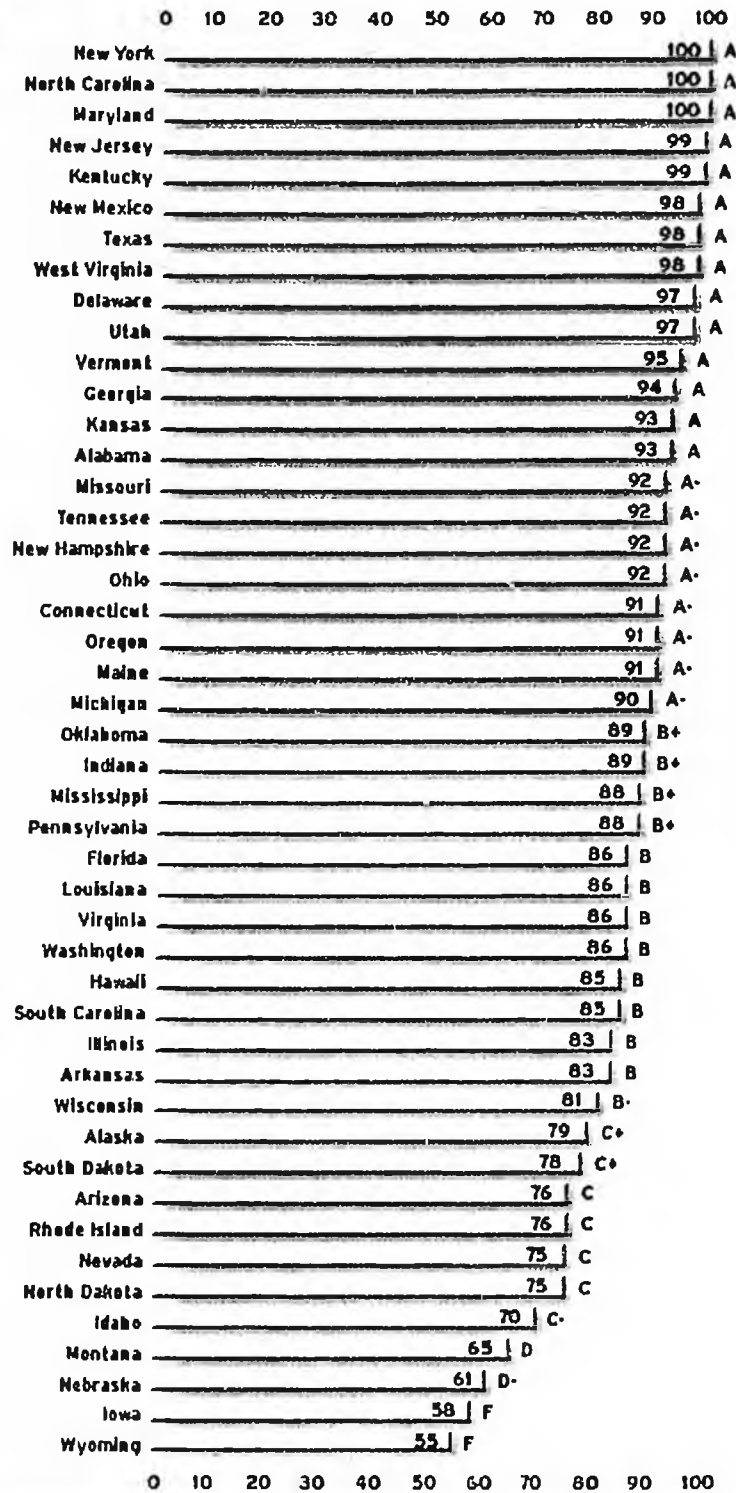
States at a Glance

(Jump to [8th Grade Math Bar Graph](#))

4th Grade - Percent at Proficient or Advanced Level in Reading
 Results of 1994 National Assessment of Educational Progress testing. Some states chose not to participate and are not listed. Figures are in percents.

(Alaska 1)





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Resources

Data Tables

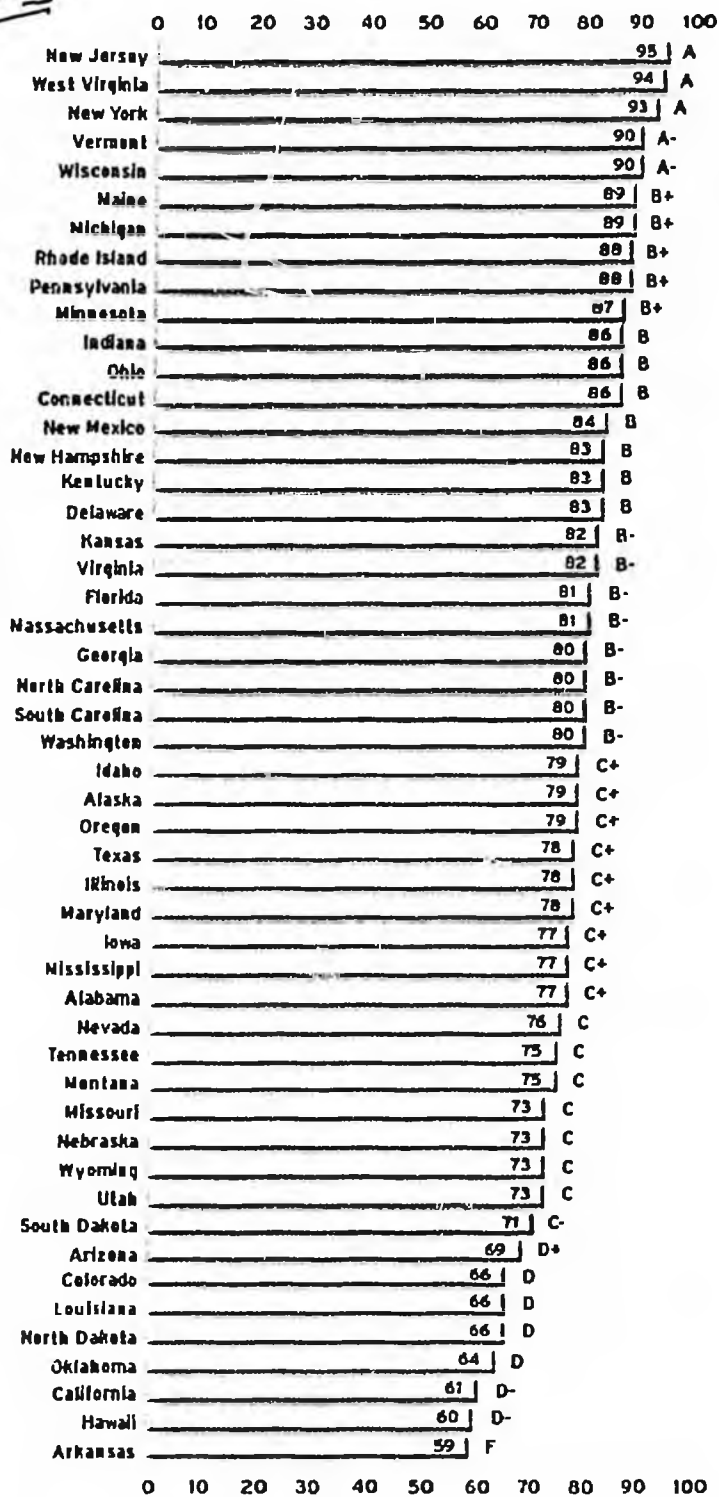
- [Table 1: Adequacy](#)
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States at a Glance

Adequacy Grades

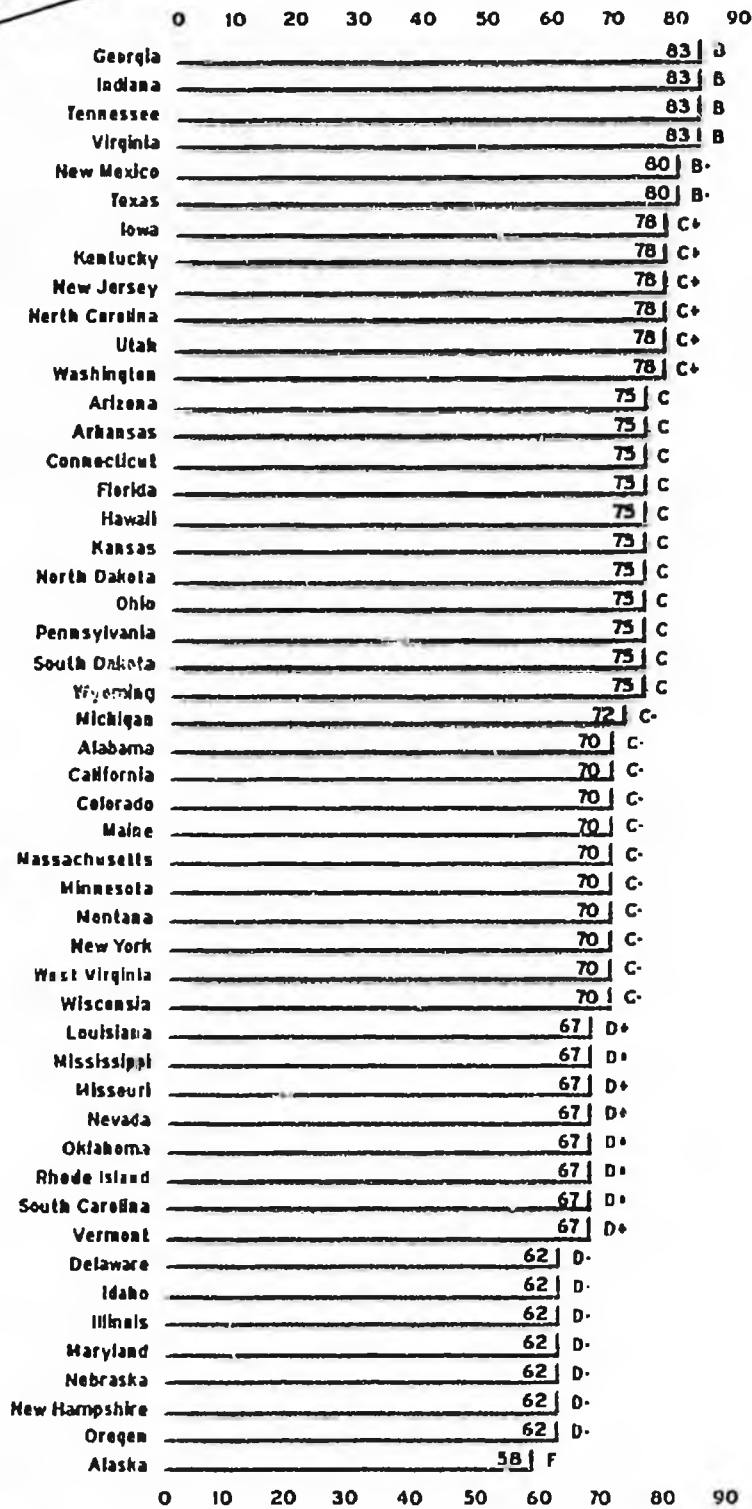
Jump to [Allocation Grades](#) bar chart or [Equity Grades](#) bar chart.

Adequacy



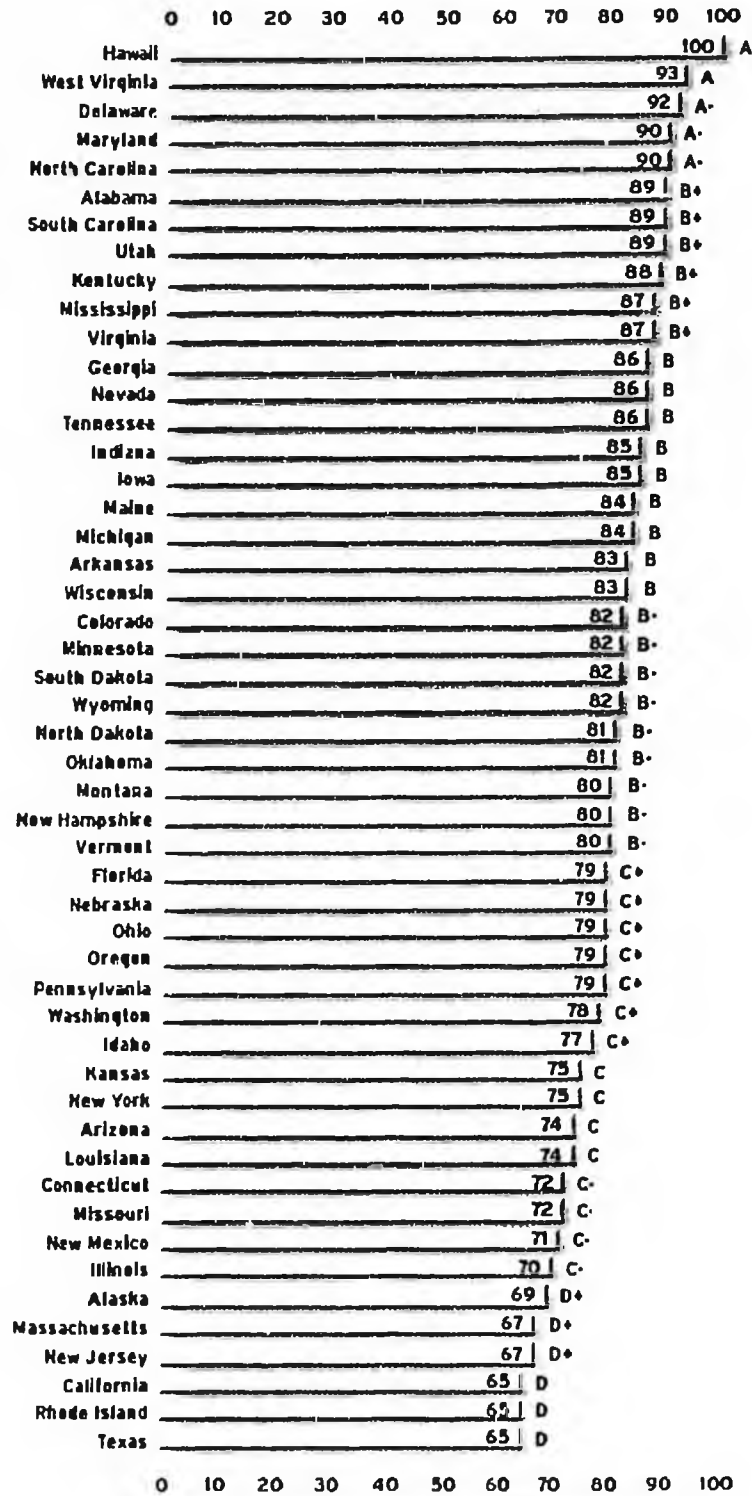
Allocation Grades

Allocation



Equity Grades

Equity



EDUCATION WEEK
 Indicator Summary
 'Money Matters'

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Student Achievement

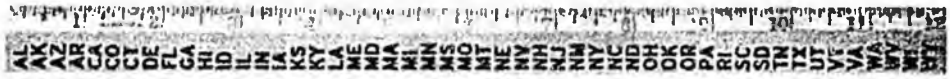
Table 3 of 3: Additional Information.

States are ranked by their 4th grade reading proficiency scores. Ties are settled by using 8th grade math proficiency scores and then alphabetical order.

All figures are in percents. "N/A" indicates that the state did not participate in the NAEP exam. "?" indicates that information was not available. NAEP places all students in one of four achievement levels: advanced, proficient, basic, or below basic.



Navigation: Click on a state's initials on the ruler to go directly to that state's data. Click on the state name in the table to see the state's data in comparison to some of its neighbors.



State	State- funded preschool for disad- vantaged, 1995	Public high schools with AP courses, 1996	8th graders taking algebra, 1992	Students taking upper- level math, 1994	Students taking upper- level science, 1994	16-19 year-olds not in school & not grads, 1993	1994 grads enrolling in college
U.S.	28	58	19	39	26	9	62
1. <u>Maine</u>	yes	72	18	45	28	5	50
2. <u>North Dakota</u>	no	7	12	56	37	5	68
3. <u>Connecticut</u>	no	95	20	45	34	4	59
4. <u>New Hampshire</u>	no	73	18	?	?	9	56
5. <u>Massachusetts</u>	yes	89	26	45	31	6	65
6. <u>Iowa</u>	yes	29	14	47	27	5	64
7. <u>Wisconsin</u>	no	67	14	49	32	5	60
8. <u>Montana</u>	no	34	?	48	28	7	54
	State- funded preschool for disad- vantaged, 1995	Public high schools with AP courses, 1996	8th graders taking algebra, 1992	Students taking upper- level math, 1994	Students taking upper- level science, 1994	16-19 year-olds not in school & not grads, 1993	1994 grads enrolling in college
9. <u>Nebraska</u>	no	17	17	52	30	6	60
10. <u>Minnesota</u>	yes	45	23	48	30	6	53
11. <u>New Jersey</u>	yes	97	19	43	27	6	64
12. <u>Indiana</u>	no	79	16	39	27	10	55
13. <u>Wyoming</u>	no	34	18	39	18	8	53
14. <u>Rhode Island</u>	32	82	21	?	?	8	65
15. <u>Missouri</u>	no	23	13	43	30	10	53
16. <u>Pennsylvania</u>	no	71	27	48	31	8	57
17. <u>Utah</u>	no	75	32	59	33	7	56

	State- funded preschool for disad- vantaged, 1995	Public high schools with AP courses, 1996	8th graders taking algebra, 1992	Students takingupper-level math, 1994	Students takingupper-level science, 1994	16-19 year-olds not in school & not grads, 1993	1994 grads enrolling in college
18. <u>North Carolina</u>	no	88	22	45	24	11	51
19. <u>Colorado</u>	yes	55	21	?	?	10	52
20. <u>New York</u>	yes	83	13	36	26	8	70
21. <u>Tennessee</u>	no	54	11	36	22	11	54
22. <u>Washington</u>	yes	62	?	35	20	6	57
23. <u>Maryland</u>	yes	92	32	?	?	8	55
24. <u>Virginia</u>	yes	89	19	?	?	7	53
25. <u>Texas</u>	yes	54	17	41	20	12	50
26. <u>Kentucky</u>	yes	67	16	40	29	11	49
	State- funded preschool for disad- vantaged, 1995	Public high schools with AP courses, 1996	8th graders taking algebra, 1992	Students takingupper-level math, 1994	Students takingupper-level science, 1994	16-19 year-olds not in school & not grads, 1993	1994 grads enrolling in college
27. <u>Georgia</u>	yes	82	18	?	?	10	59
28. <u>West Virginia</u>	yes	78	21	36	26	13	50
29. <u>Arizona</u>	yes	63	20	?	?	11	50
30. <u>Arkansas</u>	yes	28	15	38	18	8	48
31. <u>Delaware</u>	no	88	23	27	17	7	65
32. <u>Florida</u>	yes	82	23	?	?	12	49
33. <u>Alabama</u>	no	54	15	32	22	12	64
34. <u>New Mexico</u>	yes	47	13	36	18	10	54
35. <u>South Carolina</u>	yes	96	17	?	?	11	58
	State- funded preschool for disad- vantaged, 1995	Public high schools with AP courses, 1996	8th graders taking algebra, 1992	Students takingupper-level math, 1994	Students takingupper-level science, 1994	16-19 year-olds not in school & not grads, 1993	1994 grads enrolling in college
36. <u>Hawaii</u>	no	84	12	26	19	5	62
37. <u>California</u>	yes	85	21	32	18	11	61
38. <u>Mississippi</u>	no	39	13	43	41	9	69
39. <u>Louisiana</u>	yes	21	12	44	21	13	53
40. <u>Idaho</u>	no	42	18	39	17	12	48
41. <u>Michigan</u>	yes	59	19	32	15	9	60
42. <u>Ohio</u>	yes	60	13	41	23	6	51
43. <u>Oklahoma</u>	yes	16	16	38	24	10	49
44. <u>Alaska</u>	no	13	?	32	15	7	37
	State- funded preschool for disad- vantaged, 1995	Public high schools with AP courses, 1996	8th graders taking algebra, 1992	Students takingupper-level math, 1994	Students takingupper-level science, 1994	16-19 year-olds not in school & not grads, 1993	1994 grads enrolling in college
45. <u>Illinois</u>	yes	51	?	?	?	9	64
46. <u>Kansas</u>	no	23	?	?	?	6	57
47. <u>Nevada</u>	no	58	?	32	22	12	38

48. <u>Oregon</u>	yes	50	?	36	21	10	57
49. <u>South Dakota</u>	no	13	?	?	?	7	50
50. <u>Vermont</u>	yes	82	?	39	31	6	51
U.S.	28	58	19	39	26	9	62

For a complete list of sources of data, see "[Data Sources and Notes.](#)"

Go to [Main Student Achievement Data Page.](#)

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Standards & Assessment

What do we expect students to know and be able to do--and how do we judge their performance? High standards for student performance lay the foundation for the significant changes that must follow. And the work in this area appears to be paying off. This is where the states earned their highest overall grade--a solid B.

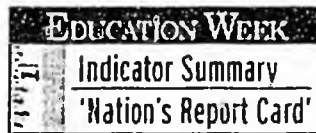
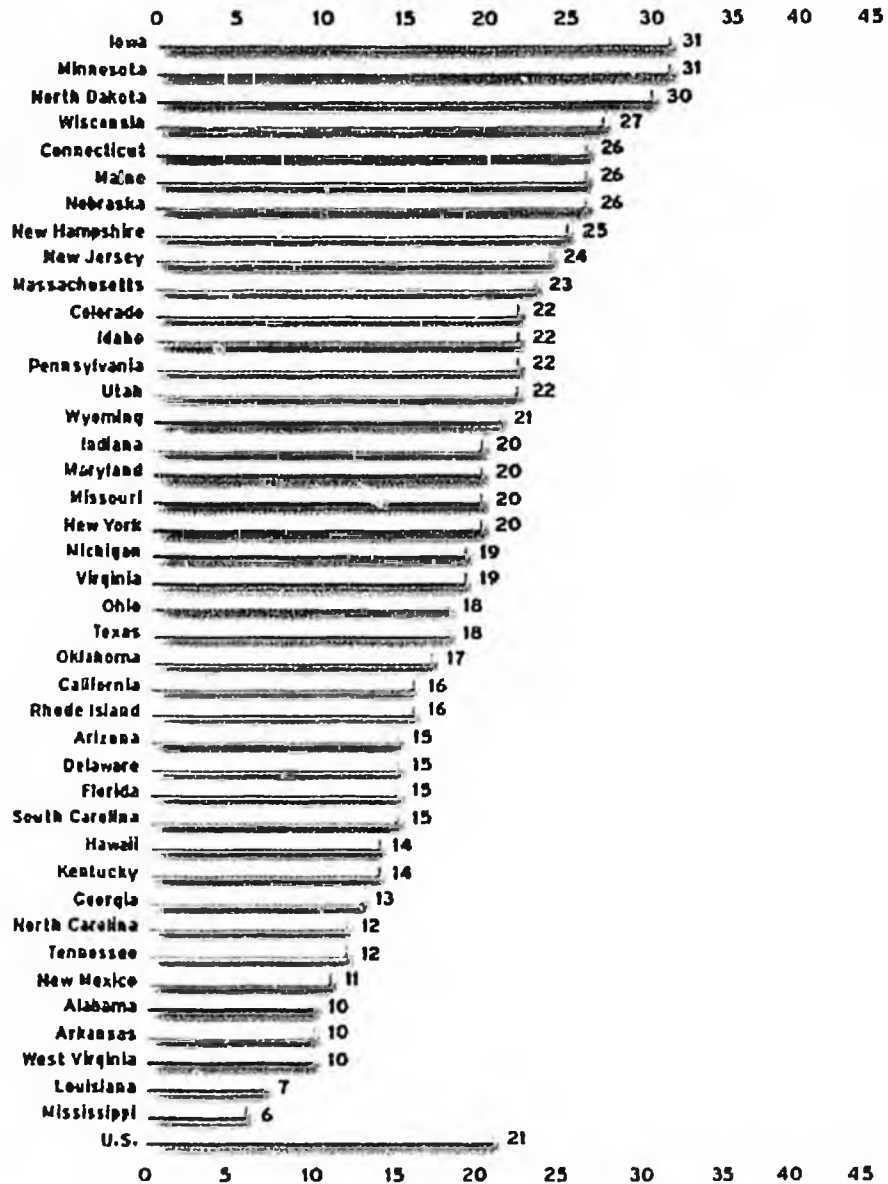
- ▶ Summary
- ▶ 'Compact for Change'
- ▶ Methodology
- ▶ Data Tables

State by State: Standards & Assessment Grades

California, Colorado, Massachusetts and Minnesota got "Incompletes" and are not listed.



8th Grade - Percent at Proficient or Advanced Level in Math
 Results of 1994 National Assessment of Educational Progress testing. Some states (Alaska 1)
 chose not to participate and are not listed. Figures are in percents.



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Quality of Teaching

The education system can only be as good as its teachers. But on average, four out of 10 secondary teachers do not have a degree in the subject they teach. Too many teachers are unlicensed. Not enough prospective teachers receive the education they need. And on-the-job education for teachers is still more a goal than a reality.

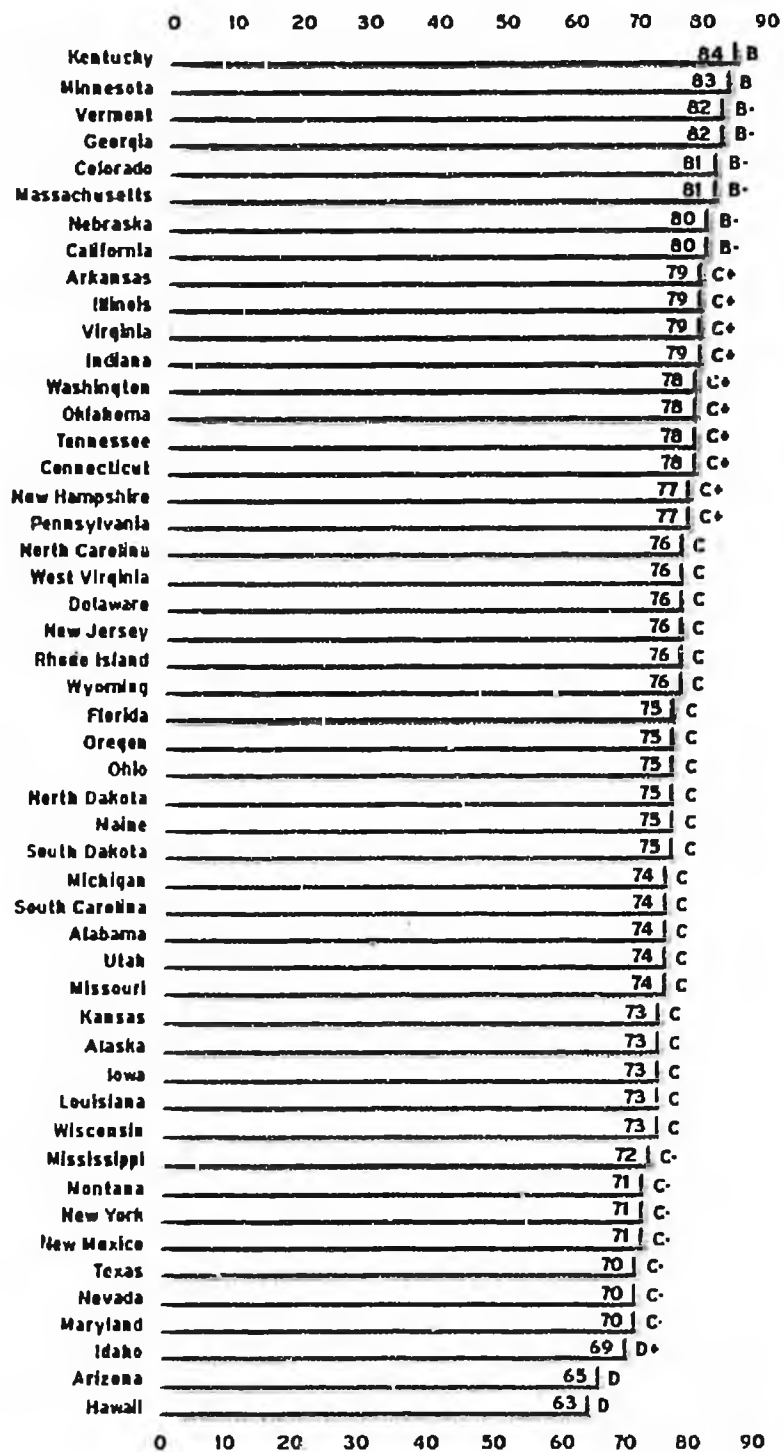
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Overall, the states get a C for quality of teaching.

- ▶ Summary
- ▶ 'To Teach Is To Learn'
- ▶ Methodology
- ▶ Data Tables



State by State: Quality of Teaching Grades



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EDUCATION WEEK



Overview

U.S. Report Card

The Indicators

How To Order

Index

School Climate

We know a lot about what makes good schools. But putting theory into practice has proven more difficult. To measure success in this area, we looked primarily at class size, the ratio of pupils to teachers in secondary schools, school organization, and school safety.

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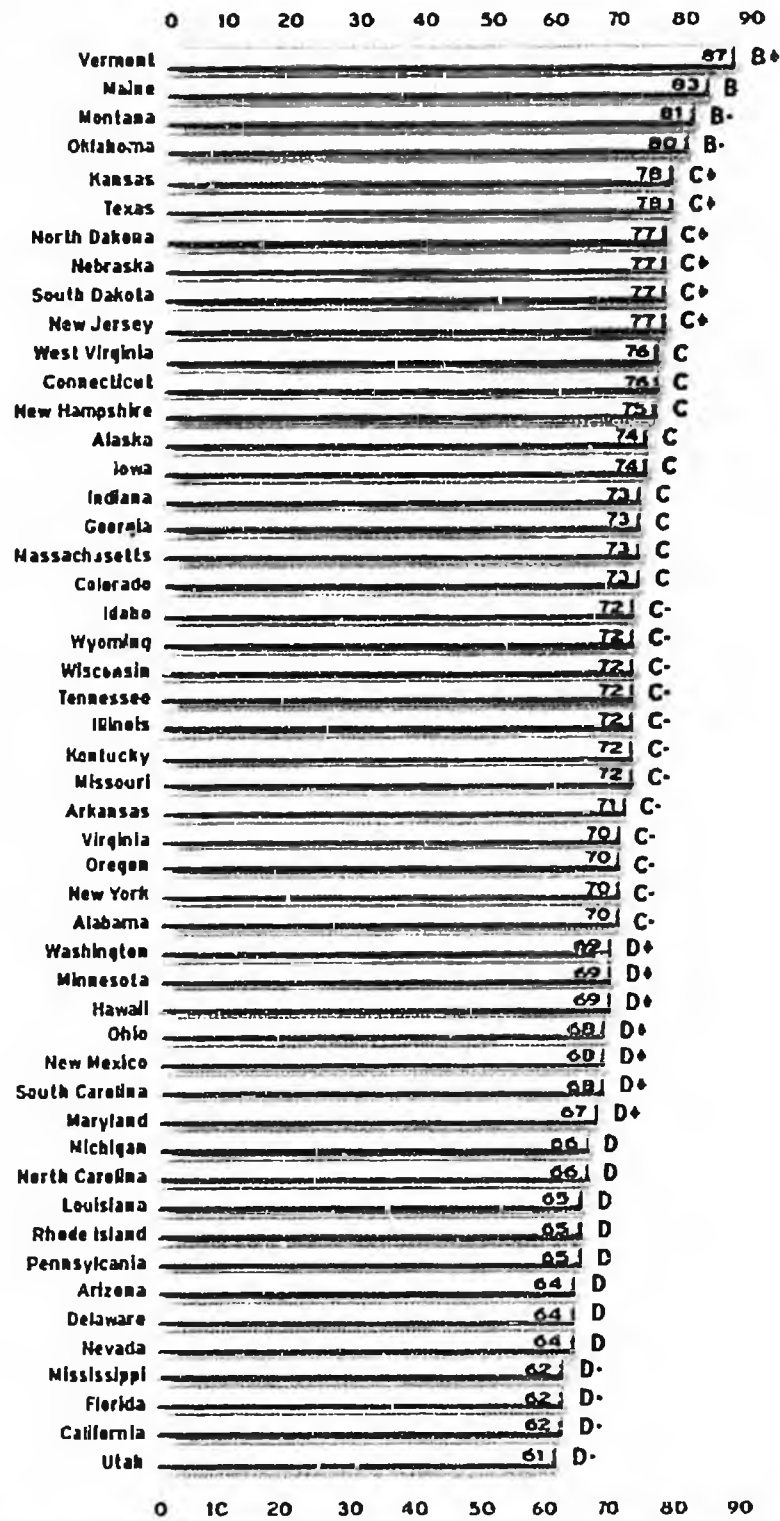
In school climate, states get their lowest scores: a C- overall.

- Summary
- 'One School That Can'
- Methodology
- Data Tables



State by State: School Climate Grades

AUTO INSURANCE



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KIPNUK TRADITIONAL COUNCIL

BOX 57 • KIPNUK, ALASKA 99614
(907) 896-5515 • FAX (907) 896-5240

March 9, 1998

Honorable Bert Sharp
Senator
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol (MS3100)
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

via fax & mail: 907-465-2070


Dear Senator Sharp:

Enclosed is Resolution 98-08 of the Kipnuk Traditional Council opposing Senate Bill 36 related to the public school funding program. We are located in the Lower Kuskokwim School District (LKSD) service area. We stand to lose our bilingual program that has proven to be a very successful program within the school curriculum under this bill. In order for our children to continue to hold on to their identity, they must understand and be able to read our language, which is Yupik.

There are numerous reasons why we have so much hopelessness and unemployment within our area, and that is, our people are not allowed to take pride in their culture and heritage. Programs like this that affect our people compound the problems we have in Rural Alaska, especially in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta region. Reduction of funds that come to our area help to take away employment from our people, and the quality educational programs that have been made available to us.

We hope that you will reconsider not passing this bill that will not only hurt us in Rural Alaska, but will create long term negative affects on our people. Thank-you in advance for not supporting Senate bill 36.

Sincerely,
Kipnuk Traditional Council
Luke Amik, Sr., Traditional Chief
Johnnie Paul, President


John G. Amik, Tribal Administrator

CC: Senator Dave Donley
Senator Sean Parnell
Senator Druë Pearce
Senator Randy Phillips
Senator Al Adams
Senator John Torgerson
Senator Lyman Hoffman
Representative Ivan Ivan
Governor Tony Knowles

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RESOLUTION 98-08

A resolution opposing Senate Bill No. 36 entitled "An Act relating to the public school funding program; relating to the definition of a school district, to the transportation of students, to school district layoff plans, to the specific education services agency, and to the child care grant program; and providing for an effective date."

WHEREAS: The Kipnuk Traditional Council is the federally recognized governing body for the Native Village of Kipnuk and the sole governing body recognized by the people of the village, and;

WHEREAS: the Native Village of Kipnuk's most important resource is its' children and will do everything to protect their interests from adverse actions and activities generated from within and without the exterior boundaries of the Native Village of Kipnuk, and;

WHEREAS: Our Yupik children are receiving their Elementary and High School education from the Lower Kuskokwim School District, one of the State of Alaska's Regional Education Attendance Areas in one of the States most impoverished area, and;

WHEREAS: The Alaska State Legislature is proposing legislation from the Senate Chambers through Senate Bill 36 which seeks to redistribute education funding dollars from rural school districts to the urban school districts, redefining school district boundaries, proposes an employment tax of 4% for districts without an economic tax base, and generally redefines most education processes as we know them, and;

WHEREAS: The passage of this particular bill will be devastating to our local school and cursory analysis of the impacts of the bill reveals that due to the drastic cuts to the Lower Kuskokwim School District, our children may not receive free or reduced school lunch, no local support for the children that need it most, bilingual and Yupik instruction would be completely eliminated, the already deteriorating overcrowded educational facility would not see any repairs or improvements, our already impoverished and unemployed people will bear the burden of a new tax, and;

WHEREAS: the enormous progress our Yupik children have made in terms of their abilities to read, write and calculate mathematics in a language that is, in the most basic sense, foreign to them, and this language being English should prove that the efforts of the educational system is working diligently to advance the knowledge, skills and abilities of our Yupik children, and;

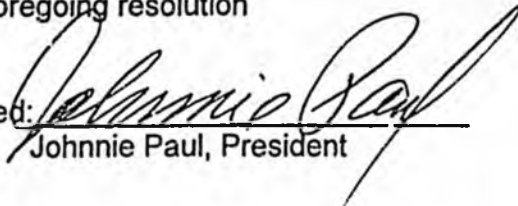
NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Native Village of Kipnuk, through its tribal governing body, the Kipnuk Traditional Council, respectfully request and implore our State Legislature, both the House of Representatives and Senate not consider Senate Bill No. 36 unless and until a complete and full analysis of the impacts of this bill to all school districts within the State of Alaska is done, and;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the Kipnuk Traditional Council, the tribal governing body for the Native Village of Kipnuk is in complete and unqualified opposition to this proposed bill on behalf of its' Yupik children.

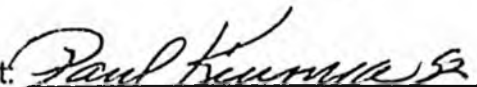
CERTIFICATION

We, the undersigned, do hereby certify that a duly called meeting of the Kipnuk Traditional Council, with a membership of seven (7) of the Native Village of Kipnuk held on March 9, 1998 by an affirmative vote of 6 a negative vote of 0 adopted the foregoing resolution

Signed:


Johnnie Paul, President

Attest:


Paul Kuyya, Sr., Vice-President

TO: Senator Bert Sharp
Senate Finance Committee
Fax# 465-2070
Senator_Bert_Sharp@legis.state.ak.us

FROM: Jackie Nelson-Lizardi, President DGESPA

In attempting to delve through the intricacies and complexities of this bill, many questions presented themselves. The first incongruity appeared in the explanation of the purpose of this bill, where it is stated that *it would allow for an equitable level of educational opportunities for those students attending the public schools of the state*. There is nothing more important than the children of Alaska, **ALL** Alaska, **NOT** just the large urban areas which already reap the benefits of city and state programs that enrich, enable and enhance the city residents. **CSSB 36 DOES NOT** represent a responsible approach to educating Alaskan children! A broader and more equitable commitment is called for. The argument is oft given that we of the rural and bush areas of the state have chosen our places of residence, lifestyles and hardships. On one hand that is correct, but financial circumstances have also dictated some of those choices. For those of us who chose to remain in the communities of our heritage, or who sought the quieter, "self-made" existences in rural Alaska as pioneers, we also voluntarily accepted the hardships and reduction of services that throughout this state's history have led the way to eventual urban development, oil, natural gas, mining and the development of other natural resources that have increased the wealth and prosperity of the urban areas and the state as a whole. Isn't it funny that this prosperity failed to enrich many of those who were most responsible. I just happen to have resided in the Delta-Greely REAA since 1977 and mused out to work daily from a home I built on a farm with **NO** road access. You all seem to be assuming us "ruralites" that this bill does not provide for urban on the backs of rural. **CSSB 36** does just that! When was the last time an urban resident **CHOSE** to have **INADEQUATE** or **UNSAFE** housing, sanitation, or schooling, even for a weekend or back-to-nature adventure. Rural Alaskan children, families and educational employees live with those "handicaps" on a daily basis.

Page 15, line 10 - Allows REAA school boards to request that the legislature incorporate their region as a municipality. Year after year I hear you, the legislators espousing from a platform of **less** government and more local involvement and control, particularly when it relates to our schools and our communities, so where is that belief supported by **CSSB 36**? This community has revisited the issue of taxes year after year and the residents have **unanimously voted it down!** That should remain our choice, **NOT** a mandate from the state! We have build **our** community to represent **our** social, economic, and religious norms and mores. The imminent realignment of Ft. Greely, our largest local employer, has begun to, and will continue to have devastating effects on our community. We have been struggling to raise ourselves from the mire of economic chaos and personal repercussions to our jobs, families, businesses, and institutions. We have only received a shadow of the

promises of state help, yet we struggle on. Our community's second largest employer has been the local school district and your inability to adequately fund education has diminished those hours, benefits and jobs already. Now through this **BAD BILL**, you intend to eradicate our district, melding it, under the auspices of **CONSOLIDATION** and **EQUITY** with Alaska Gateway. When I attended school, we were taught that the benefits of our fight for democracy ended the dictates and mandates of a totalitarian government!

I have given my best efforts to the children of the Delta-Greely School District in the past 19 years as an educational support employee. You agree that, "it takes a village (community) to raise a child, you emphasize the importance of, "building bridges between communities and schools". We are the bridges! As the educational support staff, we live in our communities for the duration, we are the parents, grandparents, employees, and school board members! We are the backbone of education, communication, and politics in our communities. Even with **3 below** cost-of-living increases in the past eight years, my dedication and expertise in my field have rewarded me with a gross annual wage flat decrease of \$3,500.00, (16%)!! My scenario is the same across rural Alaska, yet you tell us, "that we don't pay our share"? If we're talking "**FAIR SHARE**", why not compare the school-to-school, urban-to-rural, curriculum, extra and co-curricular activities, and those benefits we sweated to provide through ingenious, and creative grant writing.

The legislature's inability to fully fund education has diminished our education programs year-after-year. On one hand you inundate us with the need for teacher, school and student standards and accountability, while on the other hand, you diminish our ability to achieve those standards. It seems rather sadistic to me! The instructional program cannot continue to be cut while expecting to accomplish its education mission! One would think that the adoption of student standards would go hand-in-hand with an **INCREASE** in funding for the state's **gifted and talented programs and bilingual education**, silly me. The 4.5% allocated for gifted and talented is based on an outdated "guess", and again does not take into account the increases necessary due to the "improvements" in education derived from your improved student and teacher standards. Once again the legislative "**left hand**" fails to keep time with its "**right hand**"!

The Alaska Constitution requires that the Legislature establish and maintain a system of **PUBLIC SCHOOLS**. It doesn't reference just urban schools, or those with the larger **VOTING** population. I have already explained Delta's current and future economic state of disaster. What happens when we are not able to fund education with the \$1, 607,389.00 less that **YOU** intend to graciously bestow upon Tok and us to **SHARE**? Where have you calculated the costs of subsequent long-term litigation?

CSSB 36 is RURAL GENOCIDE!! Please **DO NOT** sacrifice our children and their education for the **VOTES** of the masses!

Jackie Nelson-Lizardi
President, DGESPA
HC 60 Box 4180
Delta Jct., AK 99737
(907) 895-4217 fax (907) 895-4278

**THE FOLLOWING PAGES MAY
NOT FILM LEGIBLY BECAUSE OF
THE POOR QUALITY OF THE ORIGINAL**

Sewage threatens school safety

Problem expected to worsen as breakup approaches

By Oakley Cochran

The Tundra Drums

PILOT STATION — At Pilot Station Elementary School last week, 7- and 8-year-old boys showed off their acrobatics on a jungle gym just feet away from an open sewer manhole containing raw sewage.

Meanwhile, a man wearing a gas mask knelt over the cordoned-off manhole, holding a halogen lamp to light the way for his co-worker, who was down in the ooze trying to fix the school's sewage pump. The pump, which failed on Jan. 20, normally moves sewage from the nearly 40-year-old school up to a sewage lagoon less than a quarter of a mile away.

Because of the pump failure, the students, staff and faculty at the elementary school have been using honey buckets for the last six weeks.

These are little kids who don't know much about hygiene, said Pamela VanWechel, superintendent of the Lower Yukon School District.

In one classroom which smelled of sewage, the students looked happy enough as they made green and purple Play-doh models of Eskimo dancers in anticipation of a weekend potlatch. But Pilot Station health aides warn about a hepatitis A outbreak, and point out the high incidence of strep throat, bronchitis, diarrhea and other illnesses at the elementary school.

In a normal February, the elementary school doesn't have a major problem with raw sewage — it's generally frozen. True, electrical problems in the past have caused pipes to freeze, and the sewage pump sometimes fails. Honey buckets are never far from being pressed into service. And this most recent pump failure has prompted teachers to shorten or move classes, parents to remove children from the school, and the school to shorten its daily operating hours — all in an effort to prevent more illnesses.

At any other school, these would be drastic measures.

But come spring breakup, the sanitation problem will get worse as raw sewage, carried by floodwaters, surrounds Pilot Station's "old town," which includes the elementary school and the homes of approximately 10 families. No amount of

George Brackm points down the manhole where men have been working to repair a broken sewage pump.

Illness rampant at sewage-plagued school

By Oakley Cochran

The Tundra Drums

PILOT STATION — The colder the better, said two Pilot Station health aides last week.

According to Molly Francis and Sheila Minock, when it's cold, the raw sewage around Pilot Station's "old town" is generally frozen — which is why there are typically fewer illnesses during the dead of winter than in spring and fall, when the sewage is fresh. The village elementary school and the homes of about 10 families are located in the old town, below the town's sewage lagoon.

Diseases resulting from the presence of raw sewage can include diarrhea, cramps, nausea, headaches, fatigue and possibly jaundice, according to Northern Testing Laboratories, an environmental consulting and testing firm with labs in Fairbanks and Anchorage. Viruses, including hepatitis, and bacteria causing cholera and other diseases can be transmitted through raw sewage.

According to Francis and Minock, the 127 students at the elementary school contract many more illnesses than students at the high school, which has 48 students and is located above the sewage lagoon. While a formal, investigative study has yet to be initiated, the Pilot Station health aides have compared the number of clinic visits from elementary students to those of high school students for four months last fall. The number of visits by elementary students appears disproportionately high.

For example, last fall elementary students visited the health clinic 38 times due to bronchitis — 23 visits occurred in October alone. Just two bronchitis-related visits were made during the four months by high school students. Elementary students went to the clinic 58 times due to diarrhea; two visits were made by high school students. And sore throats prompted 108 visits from elementary students, and 13 from high school students. Other illnesses suffered by the elementary school children have included pinkeye, viral common cold, skin problems and influenza. Faculty and staff have also been ill.

"I hope the governor learns about this. There's a chance of a hepatitis A outbreak," Minock said. She went on to say that the village had an outbreak of hepatitis in the 1960s, and several hepatitis A cases in the mid-1990s. There are at least 24 carriers of hepatitis B in the village right now, she said.

"I hate to see my grandkids going to school down there with the toilets not working good," Francis said.

TUNDRA
DRUMS
NEWS

Sewage ...

From Page 1

pumping or of going home early will eradicate this problem.

According to Linda Minock, a mother of three toddlers, she can see toilet paper floating during breakup.

The sewage problem is due, quite simply, to gravity. If the geography of the village of Pilot Station is like a salad bowl, as school principal George Brackin explained, then the old town is the pool of salad dressing left at the bottom of the bowl. On the rims of the bowl is the rest of town, including the landfill, the sewage lagoon and a stream that swells in the spring, carrying a burden of sewage from the lagoon down to the old town and into the Yukon River.

One year during breakup, the schoolyard's rocking horses floated

uptown with fecal matter, Brackin said. On a beautiful spring day, he said, the single outdoor basketball court in Pilot Station will go unused, submerged under 1 1/2 feet of floodwater. And the outdoor wooden walkways between classrooms will hover just over the flood level.

"During the springtime we have to relocate the entire school — physically move it to the high school gym," said assistant superintendent Roger Adams. This is, however, a short-term solution that jeopardizes the education of both the elementary and high school students, he said.

The most obvious long-term solution to this problem is to close the school and relocate the classes.

Yet principal Brackin, who with his wife moved to Pilot Station last August, lives in fear of this solution — in such fear that workers at the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation were

unaware of the magnitude of the problem until recently, because no one had reported it.

Because there are few public spaces in this village of 547 residents, the concern is that the DEQ will condemn the school and students won't have anywhere to go.

"Right now we're in a tough situation. We don't have any other buildings for the students," said Advisory School Board member Evan Nick. According to Nick, the city buildings don't have running water, so they can't be used as alternate classrooms. "And churches aren't for school," he said, echoing a widely-held village belief.

A new Pilot Station elementary school is the top priority for the Lower-Yukon School District, and has been for a number of years, superintendent VanWechel said. The new school is third on the statewide legislative priority list for school replacement, VanWechel said. But according to Brackin, at present the earliest that the funding will come through is 2001.

"2001—that's too long," said ASB member Laurie Edwards.

"What is it going to take to get a new school faster? Who else can we call?" asked ASB member Susie Makaili, concerned about village children being in an unsafe environment.

VanWechel is currently in Juneau trying to acquire money from the Legislature to fund the new school for Pilot Station, as well as to lobby for other Lower Yukon problems.

"Some of the legislators who haven't been in rural Alaska just don't understand the severity of the situation," she said.

"If we have a hepatitis A outbreak here, then the state officials will notice us," said journalism teacher Gail Hill. "And then it will be too late."



Oakley Cochran/Tundra Drums

Pilot Station "old town" resident Linda Minock, mother of three, stands outside her home last Friday. In the background is frozen sewage, in some places 13 feet deep, carried by a stream that flows by the elementary school. "In the spring, I can see toilet paper and stuff floating," Minock said.



Oakley Cochran/Tundra Drums

Pilot Station school principal George Brackin points down the schoolyard where workers have been working to repair a broken pump.

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Illness rampant at sewage-plagued school

By Oakley Cochran

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METRO

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS

SUNDAY, March 1, 1998 ☆

Readin', writin' and raw sewage

Sanitation problems at Bush school create health concerns

The Associated Press

PILOT STATION — Honey buckets are back at Pilot Station elementary after a pump failed at the 40-year-old school and raw sewage collected in a manhole within view of the playground.

Problems in this southwest Alaska village began about six weeks ago, and health aides are starting to fear an outbreak of disease, the Tundra Drums newspaper reported Thursday.

"I hope the governor hears

about this," said Linda Minock, a Pilot Station mother of three toddlers.

Minock, whose house is in the village's "old town," said a stream flowing past the elementary school carries sewage near her home. "In the spring, I can see toilet paper floating," she said.

A panel appointed by Gov. Tony Knowles when he first took office in 1994 has proposed an eight-year, \$1 billion plan to bring modern sanitation to rural Alaska. Knowles

has said he wants to end the use of honey buckets in Alaska.

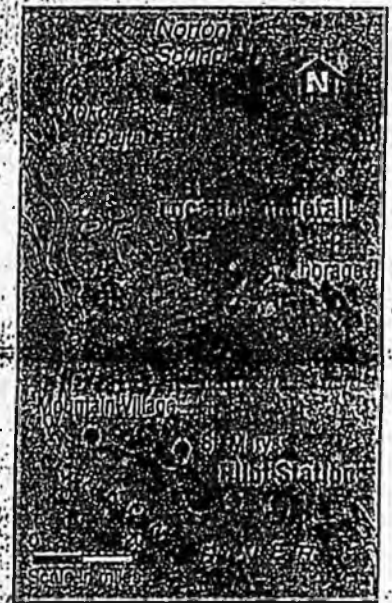
Sewage pumps have failed before at the school and honey buckets are kept ready. The current failure led Pilot Station to shorten the school day, and some parents have temporarily withdrawn their children in an effort to cut down on transmitted sickness.

Health aides say winter cold that keeps sewage frozen will help curb disease linked to human waste, such as he-

patitis and cholera. When the pump is working, sewage from the elementary school is transferred to the lagoon less than one-quarter mile away.

The newspaper adds that while sewage odors were detected on its recent classroom visit to the school, children seemed not to notice as they worked at green and purple clay figures in advance of a potlatch.

A normal disease study has not been done. See Page B-9. SCHOOL



RYAN HOBSON/Anchorage Daily News

SCHOOL: Sewage problems present health concerns

Continued from Page B-1

yet to be done. But village health aides who compared clinic visits by elementary school children to those of high schoolers over a four-month period last fall say the younger children's incidence was disproportionately high.

Authorities say the risk of illness is greater in spring, when sewage begins to thaw.

"We have to relocate the entire school," said Roger Adams, the elementary

school's assistant principal. Children are sent to the high school gym, a solution Adams says isn't good for either set of students.

A new Pilot Station elementary school building has been a top priority of the Lower Yukon Kuskokwim school district for several years, and it ranks third on a statewide legislative list. Experts say the soonest funding could arrive is three years from now.

"If we have a hepatitis A outbreak here, then the state

officials will notice us," said teacher Gail Hill. "Then it will be too late."

At least one school board member said the village is in a tough position because complaints to state officials could see the building condemned — leaving elementary school

children nowhere to go.

City buildings lack running water and may not be used as alternate classrooms.

"We don't have any other buildings for the students," said Evan Nick, a member of the village's advisory school board.



FAIRBANKS
News
Miner

IN BRIEF

ALASKA *FDNM*
5/10/98

Wire reports

**School sewer backs up;
Villagers plead to Knowles**

PILOT STATION—Honey buckets are back at Pilot Station elementary after a pump failed at the 40-year-old school and raw sewage collected in a manhole within view of the playground.

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By the risk of...

A bad mix

Sewage and students

As the Legislature grapples with the foundation formula for funding schools in Alaska, lawmakers should keep something in mind: There are schools in the Bush that don't belong in any state that considers itself civilized.

For six weeks, ever since a pump in the school failed, students and teachers at Pilot Station Elementary School have had to rely on honey buckets.

Though students are getting used to the smell of raw sewage, some still refuse to use the honey buckets and just "hold it" until they get home, which is one reason the district decided on shorter school days until the plumbing problem is fixed.

Think of keeping 120 or so elementary-school-age children clean and hygienic after using a honey bucket. Not a task for the fainthearted. But as Pamela Vanwechel, superintendent of schools for the Lower Yukon School District says, "The only inherent difficulty with honey buckets is the increased possibility of spreading disease."

As winter gives way to spring, the odor wafting from the manhole that filled with sewage when the pump failed will get harder to ignore (the manhole is 25 feet from the school). So will the fear of diseases such as hepatitis A, which is carried in fecal matter.

The longer the plumbing isn't working, the greater the risk of an outbreak of infectious disease.

For the past four years a new elementary school for Pilot Station has been among the top five capital improvement projects of the state Department of Education.

The elementary school, an old Bureau of Indian Affairs building, was built on the flood plain of the river. It's been flooded many times in the past 30 years or so.

School personnel keep a close watch on the river each spring, and prepare to evacuate the school if necessary. They haul everything of value to higher ground and then go in and clean the river muck out of the building afterward. During a flood, parts of the school, the manhole, pump, playground and basketball courts are all under water.

With luck, the plumbing soon will be fixed at Pilot Station Elementary School. But as Superintendent Vanwechel says, "Sewer problems are getting attention at the moment, but the broader problem for Pilot Station school and rural districts is the inability under the current system for us to replace schools."

It's about time some legislators make the long trip from Juneau, comfortable though it is with toilets and running water, and see for themselves what conditions the school children and teachers of Pilot Station must endure.

Though it may be years before every little village in the Bush will have the tax base to support bonds for its schools, it should not be years before the residents of Pilot Station have a safe elementary school for their children.



ANCHORAGE

As a prop, Paxon?

PROVIDENCE — The truth of the matter is that raising children is a colossal job but also a monumental drag. Thus, skeptics may make crooked smiles at Rep. Bill Paxon's announcement that he is sacrificing a successful political career to spend more time with his 21-month-old daughter, Susan Ruby.

Her mother is Susan Molinari, a former GOP representative from New York City. Only last week, the Republican from Buffalo was feverishly working the phones to replace Texas' Dick Army as House majority leader. Becoming House majority leader is not necessarily the best way to retire one's workday.

Paxon, understandably avoided mentioning that Newt Gingrich was still sore at him last summer. Paxon participated in a plot to decapitate Gingrich as House speaker and place the crown on his own head. Since then, Gingrich has not been in much of a mood to do favors for Paxon, who was once one of the Republicans' most ambitious rising stars.

No, Paxon's message was that "my decision is to put family first." This is a nice message. It may play well with some old-fashioned members of the family-values crowd. On the other hand, the ranks of the Shirley Temple fan club have thinned in recent years. Whereas most Americans would like parents to carefully raise their children, they would prefer that it be done out of oversight



FROM HARROP

into a photo opportunity, bouncing the 3-month-old for the birth camera as his wife gave the speech at the 1991 can convention. And were many dry eye Wednesday when the girl was dragged to lion's news conference which her father said giving up Washington home life. (She attend press conferences, one in Buffalo, the other in Rochester.)

Children seem in the national mind. An article in the conservative American Spectator out the producers of "phy Brown" for making famous baby disappear the television sit-com fictional baby had her stage in a national over the wisdom of motherhood.

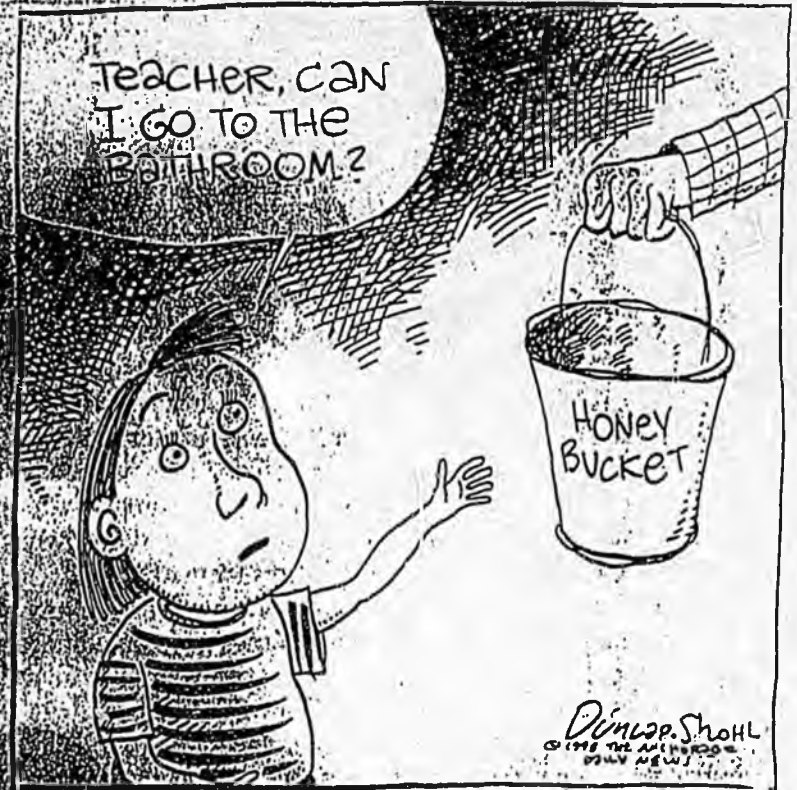
Writer Mark Steyn Murphy's producers responsible for present wholly unrealistic po



School Sanitation Snapshots:



ANCHORAGE



PILOT STATION

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As a prop, Paxon's daughter may not play

PROVIDENCE — The truth of the matter is that raising children is a colossal job but also a monumental drag. Thus, skeptics may make crooked smiles at Rep. Bill Paxon's announcement that he is sacrificing a successful political career to spend more time



All right. Let us drop our cynicism and imagine Bill Paxon and Susan Molinari sitting in the family room with complete contentment and watching Winnie the Pooh videos alongside Susan Ruby. But



Nuniwarmiut School

Home of the Herd.

Mekoryuk, Alaska 99630

Margaret Menting, Principal

(907) 827-8415

FAX COVER SHEET

Number of pages in document being sent ()

DATE : 3/17/98

TO : Alaska Legislative Information Office

FROM : M. Menting

NUNIWARMIUT SCHOOL - MEKORYUK

MESSAGE: Please send to all urban

representatives

Teachers

Nunlwarmlut School
General Delivery
Mekoryuk, AK 99830
March 17, 1988

Dear Member of the State House:

I am Margaret Menting. I am the principal of a small school on Nunivak Island. I have been teaching in the "Bush" for the past ten years. Most of us came to the bush thinking we would teach the Native people. However, I have learned more than probably all my students and the students in all the schools put together. The Native culture, like all cultures, has so much to offer and to teach all of us. The United States has always been called the melting pot of the world because it has taken many cultures to make it. The one culture we often forget makes up part of that melting pot is the Native culture. I think it is important for the welfare of Alaska that we do all we can to maintain that culture. Yet in this world today, the children will not be able to remain isolated in their villages. They must also learn the rest of the Alaskan culture. That is why we need to maintain and continue supporting our rural schools.

I realize that the urban schools also need money. With the oil price going down and the other prices going up, it is very difficult for you in Juneau to maintain a budget. However, there is the possibility of using the cigarette tax to help support the schools instead of taking money from the rural schools to support the urban. This seems to be a reciprocal of the Robin Hood theory.

Someone has said that the urban people get taxed and therefore pay for part of their schools. Whereas, the rural people get their schools all free. You, as a member of the house, know that the Native and federal land can not be taxed. Therefore, the federal government gives the state federal impact aid to supplement the tax money. Thus, as far as the state is concerned, the state receives as much per rural student as it does for an Anchorage student.

I own a building in Kenai. Therefore, I pay taxes to support the Kenai Borough Schools. I have been in many of the schools. During the summer, I pay to swim in the Kenai High School swimming pool. There is no school in the Lower Kuskokwim District with a swimming pool. My friends' children played football and tennis on the football field and tennis courts. The auditorium in Kenai is very modern and up to date. Their gym is a full size gym. These are all things that most of our schools do not have. Most schools in our district have an all purpose room that serves as a gym. In many cases, that room is much smaller than an official gym. If you are thinking that rural schools have all the latest, you are wrong.

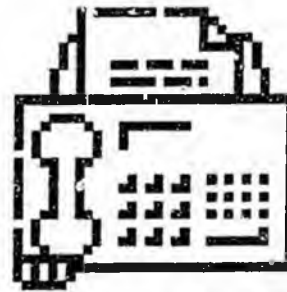
Many teachers who come from lower 48 have to use honey buckets for the first time in their lives. Many do not even know what we are talking about when we tell them they have to empty their own honey bucket. Most of our teachers do not have running water in their homes. They have to go to school to take showers and do their laundry. Some of them have housing that no one in an urban school would ever think of consider.

We in the rural area do need money to run our schools. These schools are training the future of Alaska. If these children are not educated, will they all be on welfare or food stamps? In most of our district the school is the biggest employer in the village. What happens when we have to lay off our aides? Do they turn to welfare? What can happen now that they can not hunt and fish the way they ancestors did?

I hope this helps you to see some of our concerns and why we hope you can find other ways to support all the schools.

Margaret Menting

Fax



From

*Wilkinson William E.
P. O. Box 27
Kwigillingok, Ak, 99622

(P.S. Call anytime)*

To

Sharp Bert

Fax Number

Subject

No Subject

Voice Number

1 907 588 8529

Date

3/13/98 11:30 PM

Number of Pages

3

Note

150 people picketed SB36. Am outraged! Gut us to help yourself! Thought you were a state legislator. Will fight this! Will send boycott plan to Anch, bus., villeges, sch. sites, various school boards. Are names right. Call me -Bill-588-5829.

Fax Cover Sheet

Kwigillingok School
Kwigillingok, Alaska 99622
Phone: (907) 588-8629
Fax: (907) 588-8613

Send to: Mr. Bert Sharp
Attention: _____
Fax: (907) 465-2070

From: 4th Grade
Date: March 4, 1998

Comments: Please review these letters
regarding Senate Bill 36.

Urgent

Reply ASAP

Please Comment

Please Review

For Your Information

Total number of pages including fax cover sheet.
Please call originator if you do not receive all pages.

Kwigillingok School
Kwigillingok, AK 99622
(907) 588-8629

March 3, 1988

Mr. Bert Sharp
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol (MS 3100)
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

In re: Senate Bill 86

Dear Mr. Sharp:

I am a fourth grade teacher in the Lower Kuskokwim School District, I teach in Kwigillingok, AK. I was born and raised in Alaska, and as such am a rarity in our rural education system. Most people who teach in the bush are from the Lower 48. I believe this is so because most people who are from Alaska hear the "horror stories" of life in the bush. When they return from college, armed with a degree and a teaching certificate, they seek shelter in the urban areas of Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau and Ketchikan. I was born in Wrangell and raised in Petersburg. I truly believe that I would never have seen the true beauty, integrity and diversity of my state had I not chosen to teach in this rural setting.

Our school district serves as a role model for others in the state. After years of efforts to assimilate Native Alaskans into Western culture, our district has taken a new role in the relationship between whites and natives. We have a bilingual education program that honors and supports the culture of the Yup'ik people we serve. From preschool through third grade, students are taught in Yup'ik, the language they speak at home, the language of their elders. Beginning in fourth grade, students receive instruction in English, with one period per day in Yup'ik. As a fourth grade teacher, my job is both difficult and wonderful. I help the students make the transition from Yup'ik instruction to English. I am charged with the duty of "teaching" them English, but I get to see them learn English on their own, at a rate that boggles the mind. They are like sponges, absorbing the language quickly. Yet, this bilingual approach allows them to hold on to their native language and culture, as well.

In the proposed Senate Bill 86, our district stands to lose a significant amount of funding. In fact, it is quite probable that, if this bill passes, our entire bilingual program would be cut. It would be a tragedy if this were allowed to happen. The money we receive is important and necessary to maintain the high educational standards we have set for our students. If the money is cut, or ability to maintain these standards will plummet.

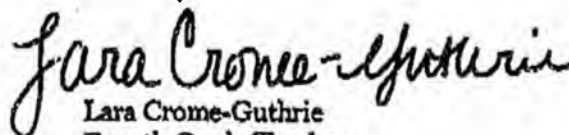
Everyday in the news, teachers hear that we "must be held accountable" for the failures of our students. We are very rarely recognized for their successes. We do not ask for recognition, but we do ask that we be allowed to keep striving for these successes. Our job in rural Alaska is a difficult one, we are able to provide a quality education for our students with the money we are allotted. We would like to improve our program even more, but that will take more long hours in and out of the classroom, more dedication and more support from government agencies: not less. It is time for these agencies to also be held accountable for the failures and successes of our students as well. Teachers are not the only link in the educational chain, and the other links must

be as strong as we are to insure the educational progress of our children.

As the Yup'ik culture, and indeed other indigenous Alaskan cultures face the assault on the loss of their subsistence lifestyle from government agencies and environmental change, they will need to depend more on their educational background to keep their culture strong and self-sufficient. That takes teachers and the government working together to provide the necessary educational support. Senate Bill 96 would remove a vital part of that support.

As an Alaskan, as a teacher and as a voter, I urge you to do everything you can to see that our children do not lose your support.

Sincerely,



Lara Crome-Guthrie
Fourth Grade Teacher
Kwigillingok, AK