

ALASKA LEGISLATURE COMMITTEE FILES 2001-2002 8672

10230 HOUSE HEALTH EDUCATION & SOCIAL SERVICES

75

Christina L. Axmaker  
P.O.Box 301  
Petersburg,Alaska 99833

I am sorry that I cannot stay for the public comment period but I also have a piano recital to attend.

I have a few concerns about the Cs for HB 464.

First, I feel that the bill needs to be adopted so that we will be protected from further over regulation from the DEED.

As time goes along, there will be new DEED board members and new Legislatures. I am concerned that there will be less home school friendly officials in the future. If we would pass this into law, then we would have the assurance that this over regulation could not happen as easily.

Please let this bill continue on the path to a law. Thank you for this time and the attention that you are putting into this. I appreciate that you are looking at this seriously.

Sharylee M. Zachary  
P.O. Box 1531  
Petersburg, Ak 99833  
[dzachary@pobox.com](mailto:dzachary@pobox.com)

I'm sorry I cannot stay for the testimony time for HB 464, but, thanks to IDEA, my daughter has a piano recital tonight and I have to run home and help her put the finishing touches on the dress she is making for it!!

I want to especially want to thank Rep. Jeanette James and Rep. Fred Dyson for all they have done in the recent past for the homeschool regulations with the DEED ☺

Our forefathers created constitutional and other laws, not only for "their present", but for the 'future generations'.

My concern is for the future generations of homeschoolers.

My children will be through school in a few years, but others are coming up behind them who will need 'statewide school district correspondence programs'.

Right now, we have people in our legislative bodies who are 'homeschool friendly'. But in the future, depending on who is voted in, we may not have as many people backing us. If that happens, the current freedoms we have within the 'statewide school district correspondence programs' may be taken away from the children of the future.

I feel HB 464 will safeguard against that happening. And I ask that HB 464 will continue to move forward and become law.

**HB**

**464**

**(File 2)**

**Subject:** re:HB464

**Date:** Thu, 7 Mar 2002 07:53:04 -0900

**From:** "Kacy and Sara Stafford" <kstafford@ideafamilies.org>

**Organization:** IDEA

**To:** <Representative\_Fred\_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us>

Mr. Dyson,

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House HES Committee on HB464, dated March 7, 2002, the following:

I am in support of HB464, co-sponsored by Reps James and Dyson. Unfortunately I will not be able to attend the hearing in person, but wish this statement of support for HB464 to be included as testimony.

Name: Kathleen Kacy Stafford

Address: 889 Chena Hot Springs Rd, Fairbanks, AK 99712

Phone: 907 457-5229

I am representing IDEA, as a parent of an IDEA high school student.

Thank you, Kacy Stafford



State Of Alaska  
Legislative Affairs Agency  
Kenai LIO  
145 Main St Lp, Ste 217  
Kenai, AK 99611  
907-283-2030

Date: 3-7-02

Please accept the enclosed original(s) of written testimony for the House HESS teleconference hearing that was scheduled on 3-7-02.

A copy of this testimony was transmitted to your committee via fax on 3-7-02.

Thank You,

Mal Byrne



# Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House HESS  
committee name

Committee on HB 464, dated March 7, 2002  
bill # / subject

I am in favor of HB 464 and would like to see it passed without further delay.  
I am a homeschool parent and feel this bill benefits all Alaskan homeschoolers.

Thank you

Signed: Oma R. Murdoch  
Testifier

IDEA Parent  
Representing (optional)

37464 Riverbend Dr Soldotna, AK 99669  
Address

907-262-1947  
Phone number



# Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House HESS  
committee name

Committee on HB 464, dated March 7, 2002  
bill # / subject

I am completely in support of the Committee Substitute for HB 464 and request that this legislation is passed quickly.

Signed: Janice Habermann  
Testifier

Self  
Representing (optional)

36790 Steadman Street Soldotna, AK 99669  
Address

(907) 262-3704  
Phone number



# Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House HESS  
committee name

Committee on \_\_\_\_\_, dated March 7, 2002  
HB 464  
bill # / subject

Thank you for taking the time to consider the importance of the passage of this bill HB464. It is vitally important for this to pass in order to maintain the integrity and the high standards that homeschoolers have imposed upon themselves.

Signed: Tami Johnson  
Testifier

IDEA Parent  
Representing (optional)

51835 Pioneer St Kenai, AK 99611  
Address

907-776-5597  
Phone number



# Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House HESS  
committee name

Committee on HB 464, dated March 7, 2002  
bill # / subject

I have been homeschooling my two children for the past 4 years and have found it to be the single most rewarding thing that I do. As a parent who started out sending my children to traditional school I was frustrated with the fact that my son was very bright but needed to be challenged and my daughter needed extra help and there just wasn't enough time in the school day to take her aside and help her. Because IDEA allows me to choose all of the curriculum that my children need I have been able to formulate an education specifically targeted to each of their strengths and weaknesses. If the committee substitute of HB 464 does not pass the Alaska State Department of Education is going to institute changes in how homeschooling is done in all State funded homeschool programs. I will not be able to use many of the curricular materials that I have long found to be successful for my children because some of them are religious in nature. I strongly believe in the right to educate my own children and if HB 464 does not pass and the department of education chooses to pass their new rulings then I will be forced to pull my children from participation in any state funded homeschool program and educate them independently. Further more, I am getting really tired of having to defend the IDEA's homeschool policies every couple of years. The state department of education has come up with something new to try and gain greater control of state wide homeschool programs every two to three years for as long as I can remember. I believe HB 464 will effectively put a stop to parents having to constantly worry each year if they will have to change the way that they do things again. In closing I would like to say that the IDEA program has helped my children and I tremendously with everything from curriculum choices to giving the kids walking stick bugs for pets. My children are figure skaters and the IDEA staff are always interested in what new accomplishments they have achieved and where they will be competing next. The teachers are always available to meet with parents and are open and supportive as well as insightful. I do not see how making more restrictions on a highly successful program can help them or be beneficial in any way. IDEA is already a fantastic program and it's policies are there for the good of the children and their education, not the money.

Signed: Cathy Shearer  
Testifier

IDEA Parent  
Representing (optional)

P.O. Box 1 Sterling, AK 99672  
Address

(907) 262-7040  
Phone number



# Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the H.S.E Committee  
Committee name

Committee on HB464, dated 3/7/02  
Bill/Subject

I agree with bill HB464 please  
adopt the Committee substitute.  
I believe Alaska's home-school  
programs are a great benefit  
to our children and I agree with  
HB464.

Thank You,  
Jimmy Boy

Signed: Jimmy Boy  
Testifier

Idea  
Representing (Optional)

11002-7685 Palmer, AK 99645  
Address

746-2069  
Phone number



# Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the HES \_\_\_\_\_  
Committee name

Committee on HB 464 \_\_\_\_\_, dated March 7<sup>th</sup> 2002  
Bill/Subject

I agree with the CS for House Bill 464. Please adopt the CS of HB 464 and pass on a timely basis. Supporting this bill makes sense and will support excellent program already succeeding!!

Signed: Anaela Dawson  
Testifier

Idea  
Representing (Optional)

PO BOX 442 Seward AK 9967  
Address

746-2621  
Phone number

Wayne and Christie Eberhardt  
17791 Birchtree Street  
Chugiak, AK 99567  
18 February 2002

Sheila Box  
Dept. of Education and Early Development  
810 West 10<sup>th</sup> St.  
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Board Members and interested parties:

Twenty-eight years ago when I came to Alaska to commercial fish and experience the "Last Frontier", I found far more than the breathtaking scenery that is our state signature. I discovered Alaska's uniquely wonderful lifestyle, which honors friendship, cooperation, and respect for individuality and adaptive innovation. Here I met my husband, a lifelong Alaskan whose parents homesteaded outside Fairbanks in 1947.

Thirteen years ago we began homeschooling our growing family. We knew it would in many ways be a sacrifice, but we considered it a privilege to tutor our children and instill our personal values.

We have seen homeschooling expand and develop over the years. In our family and nationwide, we have happily observed the positive results of diligent parental tutoring.

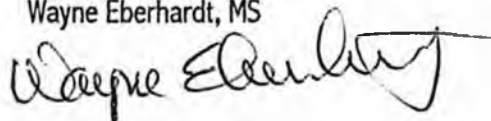
The IDEA program, which we joined three years ago, has faithfully promoted the cooperative spirit we identify with the Alaskan lifestyle. Their leaders have been very helpful in facilitating parental expertise and responsibility for our own children's education.

Personal freedom is a prime traditional value to Alaskans. In that light, we ask you not to implement the proposed regulations affecting homeschooling in our state. They run counter to the founding principles of IDEA; and they run counter to our family's ideals in homeschooling five of our children.

Thank you in advance for seriously considering our input, and that of other homeschool families, on this matter. We request you rewrite the proposed regulations after drawing on the collective wisdom gained from successful programs like IDEA, and those "veteran field teachers" like us who have lived out home education from "K through 12". We have particular concerns about these changes: (4 AAC 33.421 (d); 4AAC 33.421 (e)(1,2); 4AAC 33.421 (g)(2); 4 AAC 33.421 (e); 4 AAC 33.421 (f) (3); 4 AAC421 (h)(5); 4 AAC 33.450.

Sincerely,  
  
Christie Eberhardt, PhD

Wayne Eberhardt, MS



**Subject:** CSHB464

**Date:** Wed, 6 Mar 2002 13:57:35 -0800

**From:** "wagar family" <kwagar@ideafamilies.org>

**To:** "Wilson" <Representative\_Peggy\_Wilson@legis.state.ak.us>,  
"Stevens" <Representative\_Gary\_Stevens@legis.state.ak.us>,  
"Joule" <Representative\_Reggie\_Joule@legis.state.ak.us>,  
"Dyson" <Representative\_Fred\_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us>,  
"coghill" <Representative\_John\_Coghill@legis.state.ak.us>,  
"Cissna" <Representative\_Sharon\_Cissna@legis.state.ak.us>

Please adopt CSHB464 and save our homeschool program.

Thank you,

Kristin M. Wagar

1897 Badger Rd.

North Pole, AK 99705 488 1601

**Subject:** CSHB464

**Date:** Wed, 6 Mar 2002 14:03:16 -0800

**From:** "wagar family" <kwagar@ideafamilies.org>

**To:** "Wilson" <Representative\_Peggy\_Wilson@legis.state.ak.us>, "Stevens" <Representative\_Gary\_Stevens@legis.state.ak.us>, "Joule" <Representative\_Reggie\_Joule@legis.state.ak.us>, "Dyson" <Representative\_Fred\_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us>, "coghill" <Representative\_John\_Coghill@legis.state.ak.us>, "Cissna" <Representative\_Sharon\_Cissna@legis.state.ak.us>

Please adopt CSHB464 and save my homeschool program (IDEA)

Thank you  
Hannah Wagar  
1897 Badger Rd  
North Pole, AK 99705

907 488 1601

WES - WHAT SHOULD WE  
DO ABOUT THIS?

**Subject:** 4AAC 33.421 Statewide Correspondence Study Program Requirements

**Date:** Sun, 13 Jan 2002 22:27:47 -0900

**From:** "Terri Terreault" <designer@mtaonline.net>

**To:** <Representative\_Fred\_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us>

Dear Representative Fred Dyson,

I am a parent involved in the Cyberlynx Correspondence Program and I write to you in opposition of the proposed regulations presently out for public comment that directly relate to the operation of Statewide Correspondence Study Program Requirements.

<?xml:namespace prefix = o ns = "urn:schemas-microsoft-com:office:office" />

The proposed regulations are written by the Department of Education with little or no input from the home school population. The proposed regulations will severely limit parental choice and have a devastating impact on student opportunity.

A small percentage of children learn in "the box." Our public school system has failed the rest of our children miserably, which shows clearly in the AK Standards Bench Mark and High School Qualifying exam results. Classes are overcrowded, teachers have neither the time nor the resources to help these children, no matter how many regulations the school board institutes.

My daughter was one of these children. She began her public school career as an open, self-confident child, willing and excited about the prospect of learning. By the time she was in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade, she was convinced she was "stupid" because she continued to fall farther and farther behind. Her grades were acceptable; the teachers loved her because she was a manageable student. She was quiet, sat at her desk as she had been taught and didn't disrupt the class. By the time she was in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade she had become invisible. Although still very well behaved, she no longer attempted to participate or learn because she was convinced she wasn't capable of learning.

When the state and federal mandated testing results came in, they showed that she was at a 2-percentile level nationwide. I still believed in the school system and felt as though all my daughters' problems could be resolved. I approached Colony Middle School with my concerns and due to her grades being average, they attempted to assure me that she was doing "fine". I insisted on additional testing and by the middle of 6<sup>th</sup> grade she was placed in the special education program at 4<sup>th</sup> grade level. She was devastated, now not only did she know she was "stupid" but so did the rest of her peers. Her social life began following her academic life down the drain. As parents, we felt this was a small price to pay to insure her academic success, as we were confident that she would finally start making progress with the extra assistance. Life at home was greatly affected; our daughter who started out being self-confident and open had become a stranger who we could barely recognize. She was sullen, overly emotional and although she worked on her studies and maintained average grades by doing homework from the time she got off the bus until she went to bed, she didn't appear to us to be making much progress.

My frustration level now matched hers. I began exploring other educational possibilities and was told about the home schooling options available. I felt amazed that I lived in a state that cared so much about their children that they were given opportunities to succeed when they would fail if forced to learn the same as all other children. As both my husband and I worked full time, I couldn't see a way to participate and felt that I would be an inadequate teacher because I only had a high school education myself. Surely the teachers who had a degree in education were much more capable of teaching my child. I postponed making a decision until my daughters annual I.E.P. at the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> semester in 7<sup>th</sup> grade.

At the meeting, my daughters "team" proudly announced to me that she had progressed to the 4<sup>th</sup> grade level. When I pointed out that she started the program at the 4<sup>th</sup> grade level, they still attempted to assure me that she was still doing well. I decided to pull her out of the public school to home school her. They attempted to dissuade me by telling me that it would be detrimental to her education. My response at that point was a question. "How can I possibly do any worse than you have, when you haven't made any progress at all with her for the last year?"

For the rest of the 7<sup>th</sup> grade, we did little more than build her confidence and work on basics. In the meantime, I did a lot of research on home schooling and discussed our options with both my husband and daughter. My daughter was able to take part in her life by picking out curriculums that she believed would be geared towards her learning style. She had started smiling again and once more was looking forward to a positive learning experience. My fears receded as well and by the end of 8<sup>th</sup> grade, she not only tested out of the special education program, she had gained 5 grade levels in one year. If this seems to be unusual, compare it to Sylvan Learning Centers who can bring a child up 1 to 3 grade levels in one summer, with the children attending 1 to 2 hours a week. My daughter isn't an exception to the rule; it can be accomplished with all children unless they have severe mental handicaps.

My daughter participated in the Alaska Benchmark exams in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. She tested above the proficiency level in all three tests. An example would be: Reading; a proficient score is 265 and my daughter scored a 409. Not bad for a child that 1 ½ year's prior was in the special educational program and at a 4<sup>th</sup> grade level. We were able to accomplish this by using different curriculums, based upon my child's needs, not a curriculum "approved" by a school board that suits mainstream children. If she were mainstream, she would be in public school! My daughter is now in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade and loves learning. She developed a four year plan based on her career choice and will have a minimum of 29 high school credits as well as 18 college credits by the time she graduates. The cost to the state will be minimal compared to her public school counterparts.

This has all been accomplished by the very things the school board is determined to change. Cyberlynx has told us that the Alaska Department of Education has not acted in good faith. Please do not pass regulations until we know that the regulations are written in an open, constructive and inclusive fashion.

The proposed regulations listed under 4 AAC 33.421 Statewide Correspondence Study Program Requirements should be shelved in their entirety until we can be certain that they are not unfairly biased against those of us that choose to take responsibility for educating our children.

Sincerely,

Terri L Terreault

2050 Village Drive South

Wasilla, AK. 99654-3625

[designer@mtaonline.net](mailto:designer@mtaonline.net)

907-373-3364

Mary Neary  
4113 Dogwood Lane  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

WES

February 18, 2002

Rep. Fred Dyson  
State Capitol, Room 104  
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Representative Dyson,

I am a homeschooling parent in a statewide correspondence program wanting to let you know of my concerns about the proposed regulations that affect homeschooling in Alaska. I am asking you please not to approve these regulations, as they will seriously restrict my ability to educate my children effectively. These regulations add burdensome details to both staff and parents.

My children are currently enrolled in the I.D.E.A. program. We have been with I.D.E.A. for four years and have been very impressed with the level of support and availability of resources that this program has afforded us. We are very proud of our program and think that it provides a level of academic excellence that is visionary for our system. When we made the decision to homeschool we were not aware of this type of program and were planning to educate our children without the support of a correspondence program. It is very important to us individually to choose the materials and methods of education. There are many wonderful homeschooling materials available and we did not want to be restricted in our curriculum choices. This is why we chose a program like I.D.E.A. rather than a program like A.C.S. The enrollment numbers of I.D.E.A. reflect that this program offers an educational choice that is valued by many Alaskan families.

We also wanted to optimize our time in educating our children rather than filling out paperwork for a teacher or program like A.C.S. The proposed regulations cause me great concern that they will affect the way programs as I.D.E.A. will run. I am concerned that they may cause a failure of these programs to continue by placing burdensome restrictions on the resources these programs offer.

I would like to comment on specific parts of the regulations.

Requiring statewide programs to submit a yearly application [4 AAC 33.421(a)]. Charter schools apply once and then reapply every ten years. I want to allow the state correspondence schools the same requirements. Let our testing scores reflect how our school compares. We are at a par with other school district programs. This is not a high-risk school and there are other procedures already in place to monitor a school district.

Restrictions on the use of curricular materials privately purchased. [4 AAC 33.421(d), 4 AAC 33.42(e)(1) and 4 AAC 33.421(g)(2)]. I have chosen privately to purchase a few curricular materials that IDEA would not pay for because they had some reference to religious material in them. These materials provide excellent educational instruction in some areas. Specifically for my child these are a grammar program and a Latin program. The educational content of these materials can be taught and demonstrated without crossing the line of religious content. For example, a verb is a verb regardless of the context of the sentence, which contains it. I would like to have this section removed as I think it is unnecessary.

Mandating the level and type of teacher support [4 AAC 33.421(h)(5)]. Instead of mandating monthly meetings between the parent and student it would provide greater flexibility to allow the parent and teacher to contract an agreement what materials will be reviewed. Building based programs do not require monthly teacher conferences and it would be burdensome for both the parent and program staff to do this. The staff would be better utilized by providing the support that is currently offered. An assessment plan is already required and recognized. This level of detail is unnecessary.

Students missing mandated tests are not allowed to re-enroll or enroll in another program without specifying that normal absences are allowable [4AAC 33.450]. The requirements here should match those of other state run schools. An agreement to send children to standardized testing is already part of the enrollment packet. Normal excuses (Sick, out of state, vacation) should be allowed.

Contact-teacher approval for all expenditures [4 AAC 33.421(h)(5)]. This is an unnecessary burden on staff. The ordering department already monitors this and forwards anything out of the ordinary to the contact teacher. This would slow the ordering process and efficiency of the already existing system and cause unnecessary delays. Certified teachers within the program have already reviewed and approved curriculum and asking them to review all materials for each student would require a tremendous amount of time that will take away from the quality of the program.

Thank you for taking the time to review these concerns. I am confident that rewrite of these regulations can take place that will enhance our educational efforts and contain input from homeschoolers and programs like I.D.E.A. which support them. Please keep in mind that Alaska has the best homeschooling laws in the country. If parental involvement in education is a good thing then our regulations would serve better to facilitate that rather than making it more difficult. Providing the best education for our children is our primary concern.

Sincerely,

Mary Neary

c.c.: Sheila Box, Exec. Sec. To the Board  
Dept. of Education and Early Development  
801 West 10th St.  
Juneau, AK 99801

Dr Shirley Holloway  
Regulation Review  
801 10<sup>th</sup> St  
Juneau, AK 99801

Rep. Bill Hudson  
State Capitol, Room 502

Sen. Beth Kerttula  
State Capitol, Room 430

Sen. Kim Elton  
State Capitol, Room 504

Rep. John Coghill  
State Capitol, Room 102

W&S FYI

February 17, 2002

Alan and Ellen Rogers  
P.O.Box 34401  
Juneau, AK 99803

Rep. Fred Dyson  
State Capitol, Room 104  
Juneau, AK 99801-1184

RE: 4AAC 33.421 Statewide Correspondence Study Program Requirements

Dear Rep. Dyson:

We are very concerned with the newly proposed regulations related to the operation of the Statewide Correspondence Study Program Requirements. We as parents of a child enrolled in the CyberLynx Correspondence Program desire to have input or comment as to the outcome that directly affects our program and the way we educate our daughter.

The Department of Education would directly benefit in making a more informed decision by consulting home schooling parents who educate in the home daily. It is hard to understand the decision to rewrite regulations without a full investigation, data gathering, and input from all the parties that are involved in the process as the results are sure to be skewed. The proposed regulations should be set aside and an effort made to ascertain that all information is gathered from all parties involved, that there is no double standard present, and that there is no unfair bias against those of us who have made an educated decision to responsibly educate our own children.

The following are the areas that we have the greatest concerns and objections:

33.421 (c) *Requiring curriculum materials to be of the same quality as offered in the public school programs.* We have in the past used home designed courses for many subjects and have adjusted prepared curriculum so that they meet the needs, learning styles and interests of our children. Learning is an individual process. It is impossible to take one type of curricula and teaching style and assume that all individuals will be able to assimilate the information required. Individual Learning Programs or Individual Educational Programs are created for that purpose and home education with home designed courses are just that, an ILP/IEP. Parents are much better able to assess our children's needs than a school administrator or teacher who is not on site to see the daily process of learning and struggles. Another concern is that the Department of Education is demanding further mandates beyond those that the legislature has already passed legislation.

33.421 (d) *The staff shall not provide instruction using religious, partisan, sectarian, or denominational curricula purchased privately by the student if the curricula teach particular religion as true.* We follow the regulation that mandates private purchasing of religious materials or curriculum. Our Constitution promises religious freedom and we exercise this freedom in our home. We educate our children in many things; academics, moral values, and religious beliefs. We do not require that CyberLynx purchase these religious items. We expect and have a right to teach our religious beliefs in our home, just as every other family who is in the public school system expects to teach their moral values and religious beliefs without penalty.

33.421 (e) (1) *...monitoring of the student...the monitoring must include at least monthly review of the student's work...* "Monthly review of the student's work" is not well defined. How is this to be accomplished? It seems very burdensome and costly. We are not saying that monitoring is not necessary, however, the method needs to be well thought out so we are not required to send in every bit of completed work. The added cost will need to be absorbed somewhere and will most likely will be the student's allocation. This decreases the finances with which to provide education.

(e) (2) *grades or standards met determined and assigned by a certified teacher.* Certified teachers are not the only person competent to assign grades. My highschool aged daughter in the public school system frequently is involved in peer grading of projects and assignments which is then "signed off" by their teacher. As this is an accepted procedure in the public school why is it not acceptable in our situation? We currently give grades for our daughter in all of her subjects. Our teacher advisors can also "sign off" on these grades as we assign them. The current legislative law leaves the educational process up to the parents without mandating that they be certified teachers. This allows for grading without the involvement of certified teachers.

33.421 (h) (2) *materials purchased with state funding are property of the program: non consumable material must be returned to the program when the student exits the program for any reason.* The return of all non consumable items would increase the expense of processing, mailing, storing, etc. This expense would be a financial burden that would be borne by the program and the students reducing funds available for the student's education. The items that are returned would be outdated and unusable by the administration and would be of no value to anyone. This amendment makes no sense and should be removed from the regulations.

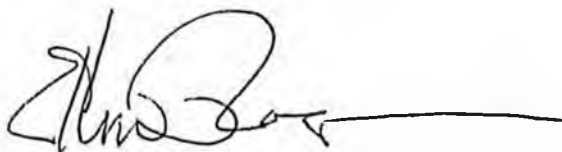
33.450 (a) *If a student fails to take a state-mandated assessment test, the student is ineligible for enrollment in the statewide correspondence programs for the following year unless the district of enrollment has excused the student from the state mandated test.* Attendance at standardized tests is already a requirement of CyberLynx and we are informed of this in the enrollment process. We object to the part of the regulation that states that a student is ineligible for enrollment for the next year if the test is missed. There are circumstances in all of our lives that are beyond our control. There are no provisions for taking the test at a later date even if the student was able and willing. If a child in the public school system fails to take the state mandated test is he/she then barred from enrollment to the public school system? Why are the statewide correspondence study system

students being penalized while the public school system students are not? At the very least, there should be a documented pattern of testing non-compliance shown. Alternate testing dates should be available if the penalty for missing testing is to be so severe.

The overtones of these proposed regulations are that the statewide correspondence program and their students are a school and students "at risk". Benchmark test, Terra Nova test and our personal achievement test scores show results that are contrary to that. According to test scores that are available to the public, the statewide correspondence program students are on a par with the public school tests. My daughters' test scores are in the 90<sup>th</sup> to 99<sup>th</sup> percentile compared to the public school students on every standardized test given.

We have one child in 10<sup>th</sup> grade and one in 4<sup>th</sup> grade. We home schooled our older daughter during her middle school years and we have home schooled our 4<sup>th</sup> grader since she entered school age and plan to continue as long it benefits her learning process. CyberLynx has provided us with a great process for educating our children. There is no need for any changes in the regulations in our view. The changes that are proposed are not in the best interest of the education of the students in this program. It seems the regulations are trying to change our program into another public school program which does not serve the needs of our students. These proposals need much further investigation and input and a process that will include the input from those involved in the system. They should not be adopted as they stand.

Sincerely,



Alan and Ellen Rogers

Dear State Board of Education;

I am a certified teacher who is currently teaching full time in my home. I am homeschooling three of our five children. We have been homeschooling for 8 years; 5 years on our own and the past three years in partnership with I.D.E.A. This program has provided resources that have greatly enriched our children's education, providing the ultimate opportunities for our children as a result of the partnering of families and state.

I.D.E.A. assists the homeschooling community through various aides and support systems. They have designed a unique program that partners w/ parents and students of homeschoolers while maintaining the high standards of the state's requirements. The program's strengths are:

1. REQUIRED Individual Learning Plans
2. FREEDOM to select and order curricular materials to meet my child's ILP's
3. CERTIFIED teacher support and other staff
4. ACCOUNTABILITY through progress reports and follow-up
5. STATE MANDATED TESTING access
6. FINANCIAL ALLOCATIONS to enable families to enrich their teaching opportunities
7. CURRICULUM FAIRS and extensive PO Vendor list
8. PRACTICAL/HELPFUL WORKSHOP opportunities
9. SECONDARY EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES, COUNCILING AND GUIDANCE ie; transcripts, graduation ceremony
10. PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL

**THIS PROGRAM WORKS!!** The scores on the state mandated tests (total averages: State = 61.9% vs. IDEA = 64.5%) are showing that what is currently in place is successful. I find myself asking the question: "Why change something that works well for ALL parties involved?"

A few short years ago, our state government granted us incredible freedom as homeschoolers to educate our children unhindered by laws and regulations that had previously been required. By doing so, you in essence, told us that you believed we are able to do our job and do it well w/o unnecessary laws and regulations. This brings me to my second question: Why has your confidence in our ability to educate our children changed now that we are partnering w/ you through state correspondence schools?

One main personal concern my husband and I have is centered on curricula choices. We have elected to pay out-of-pocket to purchase Christian curricula for the past 8 years. As I read through the proposed regulations it appears that this freedom is at risk due to restrictions that would be placed on I.D.E.A. teachers. Interfacing (on educational matters) between teacher and family would no longer be allowed if the family were using materials other than secular curricula. One reason we choose to homeschool is to have direct control over the choice of curricula and the type of education our children receive. If this freedom were removed, we would be forced to return to homeschooling our children as we have in the past, w/o partnering w/ the state through the I.D.E.A. program. Our children (as well as several hundred others) have indeed been enriched through the opportunities provided through I.D.E.A. We would be very disappointed if we were forced to leave the program due to the proposed regulations.

**If your main concern is indeed the children, then please do not alter and/or impose regulations upon the presently existing I.D.E.A. partnership program!** These changes would only serve to entangle and distract from the services they are presently providing.

Thank you for your attention to my concerns. I trust you will make the decisions that are truly in the best interest of the children of this great state.

Sincerely,

Julie M. Wohrle

**Subject: RE: Proposed Regulation Change effecting homeschoolers**

**Date:** Thu, 28 Feb 2002 13:18:35 -0900

**From:** "Terri L. Terreault" <designer@mtaonline.net>

**To:** "Sharron Odell" <Sharron\_Odell@Legis.state.ak.us>

**CC:** "Lyda Green" <Senator\_Lyda\_Green@Legis.state.ak.us>, "Loren Leman" <Senator\_Loren\_Leman@Legis.state.ak.us>, "Wes Keller" <Wes\_Keller@Legis.state.ak.us>

Sharron,

Rep. Kohring is more than welcome to use my letter if he feels it would be of any assistance in this matter. I received the new and improved changes proposed by the EED yesterday and wrote another letter to them that I have copied below. This letter may be of more assistance than my first letter would be. It's up to Rep. Kohring which one (or both) he would prefer to use. They may be used for the hearing tomorrow as well, which brings me to my next question, where is that hearing being held at? I was notified that I could attend but I'm really not sure where to go. Thank you for your time on this issue.

This is the letter being sent to the EED:

The EED Proposed Regulations for Correspondence Schools states: "The State considers all students enrolled in a public school district program as public school students. This is so whether the students attend classes in a school district building or whether they study at home." "The state regulates public schools to make certain students get the best education possible and so that all children obtain equitable treatment in public schools." They further go on to state, "Publicly funded correspondence programs are alternatives to the regular public school." Which is it? Are they public school students or are they alternative public school students? The EED's mission is to assure that "all children obtain equitable treatment in public schools." In order to accomplish this mission, they would need to regulate correspondence schools the same as a "regular" public school. If a correspondence school can lose state approval if their statewide average falls below 10 percent, then it stands to reason that the "regular public schools" should also lose state approval when they fall under the 10 percent set out by the EED. If a child fails to take a state mandated test in a "regular public school", they should lose the ability to enroll in that school district or any other school district the following year. If a "student cannot demonstrate adequate progress in reading, writing and math on state exams," a solution needs to be addressed that is fair and consistent for all students, not one that only applies to correspondence schools. Where in the EED's proposal is there any "equitable treatment?" It is obvious that the EED is attacking only correspondence programs that enroll students from outside a school district's "legally defined geographical boundaries."

The statement made by the EED that students receive more "attention and supervision" available in a regular public school is ludicrous. I would like to know where the EED is getting the facts to support that statement.

My daughter was in the public school system. By 7th grade she was getting so much "attention and supervision" that she was failing math and had been placed in special education for her writing skills and tested out at a 2 percentile level, nationwide. The certified teachers that were supervising my daughter had an average of 33 to 36 students in each class. When my daughter was placed in the special education program she was at 4th grade level. One year later, she was still at 4th grade level. Within one year of home schooling she had gained five grade levels and was removed from the special education program. She took the

Alaska Benchmark Exam and passed all three tests. Can the EED explain how being in a regular public school was affording my daughter more attention and supervision? The progress my daughter has made was based on the supervision and attention that she was receiving from her parent, not a certified teacher. I am perfectly capable of grading my daughter's work and checking over the assignments that I give her. Her curriculum is based on her needs, not the needs of the rest of the children in the "regular" public school setting. Had I not been doing my job correctly, it would have been apparent on her results from the Alaska Benchmark Exam.

There are home-schooled children that are struggling, there are also children in the "regular school setting" that are struggling as well and certified teachers are supervising them. What is the excuse from the EED as to why those children are failing to learn? My point is that all children are different, they have different learning styles that allow them to excel in different settings. Some thrive in correspondence school; some in public school and others do better in private school or charter schools. The only people that can make the decisions on where these children will learn to the best of their ability, is the very people who know them - their parents, not the EED. A certified teacher is no more capable of teaching my child than I am. My child receives a great deal more supervision and attention in our home than she did in public school. She is very well socialized; she participates in dance, singing, chess club, youth group and many other activities. She is capable of talking with people in any age group instead of only her peers like so many of her "regular" public school counterparts. I do not have any concerns with a certified teacher checking my daughter's work; that is why we turn in portfolios every year along with her grades. If she were to fail the Alaska State Benchmark or High School Qualifying Exams, then I could understand why she might need to be placed under a more restrictive supervision within our home school organization just as I would expect to see her "regular" public school counterparts placed under more supervision when they fail the exams.

The following chart shows the HSGQE Failure Rates for both public schools in Anchorage and the Mat-Su Valley at the 11th grade level, along with two of the home schools that will be affected by the EED's proposed regulations.

2001 HSGQE Failure Rates

| School:              | Reading: | Writing: | Math: |
|----------------------|----------|----------|-------|
| Colony High School:  | 60%      | 66%      | 52.9% |
| Wasilla High School: | 57.1%    | 74%      | 63.6% |
| Diamond High School: | 71%      | 77.3%    | 76.9% |
| East High School:    | 83%      | 83.2%    | 77.5% |
| West High School:    | 87.9%    | 80.6%    | 81.7% |
| Cyberlynx:           | 28.6%    | 68%      | 75%   |
| IDEA:                | 39.1%    | 69.4%    | 67.2% |

As a parent and an educator, I am not impressed with any of these grades but at the very least, a larger portion of the children in home school are able to read which is more than I can say for their "regular" public school counterparts who are receiving "more attention and supervision."

Last but certainly not least, where is the funding coming from for all the additior staff it would take to grade and oversee all of the home-schooled students in this state? Cyberlynx currently has approximately 1746 students enrolled and they would have to see 87 students a day to fulfill the EED's proposed monthly requirement. IDEA has approximately 3104 students enrolled and they will have to see 155 students daily. These are only two of ten schools being affected by these proposed changes. When will all these schools have time to grade the student's work with the amount of children they will be seeing daily? The EED must be aware of the State's current budget difficulties,

I would think that they would take the funding into consideration when they are making decisions, unless of course they are really just trying to make it impossible for correspondence schools to operate in an attempt to assure that all children in the state are mandated to only have one option, public school.

Who is really loosing out on these proposed changes? As far as I can tell, it's the very students that the EED is purportedly trying to protect.

Terri L Terreault  
2050 Village Drive South  
Wasilla, AK. 99654-3625  
907-373-3364



# Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House Health, Education, and Social Services  
com mittee name

Committee on CS of HB464  
bill # / subject

, dated 3,4,2002 (3/7/02) dl.

I have been informed of your work on behalf of the Homeschoolers of the State that choose to enroll our children in a State Correspondence Group. Thankyou for your work. I'd like to encourage you to forward your Committee Substitute for HB464 so that we can continue to school our children and enjoy the very valuable help that we receive from the good folks at IDEA. The added scrutiny that HB464 calls for would be burdensome and costly, and would serve no purpose regarding a better education for our children. The educational needs of our children and ourselves as parent/educators as best served by the local control and accountability that your Committee Substitute allows, and indeed, that we have enjoyed for some time.

Signed: Darrell W. Kincaid  
Testifier

..... Parent/Educator in the IDEA program  
Representing (optional)

38710 Highercrest Court Sterling, Alaska 99672  
Address

907-262-1535  
Phone number

**Subject:** HB464

**Date:** Sun, 3 Mar 2002 20:30:17 -0900

**From:** "William A. and Carol Hill" <wachill@gci.net>

**To:** "Fred Dyson" <Representative\_Fred\_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us>

Hi - Thank you for proposing the substitute version of this bill entitled "An act relating to statewide school district correspondence study programs" which is much needed to give the proper direction to the Department of EED. We're in agreement with you and hope you're able to get it passed soon. - Bill

**Subject:** re: CS version of HB464

**Date:** Sun, 3 Mar 2002 18:18:19 -0900

**From:** "Brian Springer" <bspringer@ideafamilies.org>

**To:** <Jason\_Hooley@legis.state.ak.us>

**CC:** "Fred Dyson" <Representative\_Fred\_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us>, "Peggy Wilson" <Representative\_Peggy\_Wilson@legis.state.ak.us>, "John Coghill" <Representative\_John\_Coghill@legis.state.ak.us>, "Gary Stevens" <Representative\_Gary\_Stevens@legis.state.ak.us>, "Vic Kohring" <Representative\_Vic\_Kohring@legis.state.ak.us>, "Sharon Cissna" <Representative\_Sharon\_Cissna@legis.state.ak.us>, "Reggie Joule" <Representative\_Reggie\_Joule@legis.state.ak.us>

My name is Terri Springer. I am both a certified teacher in the State of Alaska and a home schooling parent with Galena School District's IDEA Program. I am in full support of CS version of HB464 and would like to encourage its timely passage. The provisions of this bill would enable myself and other parent/teachers like me to continue to educate our own children, in our own homes, with the support of other trained educators, in a wonderfully unique, efficient, and effective way. Thank You So Very Much!

homeschool

**Subject:** homeschool

**Date:** Sun, 03 Mar 2002 15:44:43 -0900

**From:** Tyler and Cindy Schlung <schlung@nook.net>

**To:** Representative\_Fred\_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us

Hello,

I am writing you to encourage you in your new bill to restrict  
legislation overregulating homeschool.

Thanks,

Cindy Schlung

**Subject:** HES committee

**Date:** Sun, 3 Mar 2002 07:55:49 -0900

**From:** "Fletcher family" <bletcher@ideafamilies.org>

**To:** <Representative\_Fred\_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us>

Honorable Rep. Fred Dyson

Thank you for sponsoring HB464. I have emailed the following to each of your colleagues on the House HES committee.

I understand that in your capacity on the House Health Education and Social Services Committee you will shortly be considering the CS of HB 464 limiting the ability of DEED to regulate state-wide correspondence programs.

Having recently commented at some length on DEED's 4 AAC 33.420-.490 I received from the State Board a 'Question & Answer' document that makes it clear that they really don't understand the purpose of the programs they're regulating.

The impending excessive regulations have placed Alaskan homeschools under a stifling cloud, and the time spent in addressing this really detracts from our ability to provide for our children's education. I hope you and your colleagues on the Committee will pass this bill ASAP.

Thank you for your consideration,

Barrett Fletcher

PO Box 575

Homer, AK 99603-0575

**Subject: HB464 - Please support it!**

**Date:** Sun, 3 Mar 2002 06:43:24 -0900

**From:** "Bill Miller" <kenai@sarcomgs.com>

**To:** <Jason\_Hooley@legis.state.ak.us>, <Representative\_Fred\_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us>, <Representative\_Reggie\_Joule@legis.state.ak.us>, <Representative\_Sharon\_Cissna@legis.state.ak.us>

**CC:** <Representative\_Peggy\_Wilson@legis.state.ak.us>, <Representative\_John\_Coghill@legis.state.ak.us>, <Representative\_Gary\_Stevens@legis.state.ak.us>, <Representative\_Vic\_Kohring@legis.state.ak.us>

HB464 - Please include this message in the packet for the committee members

Distinguished House HES Committee Members,

We wanted to take a moment to urge both of you to support HB464 as we feel that the Dept. of Education and Early Development should be limited with regards to enacting legislation that affects statewide correspondence programs. We homeschool our son and believe it is the best education that he could ever get. I work for XTO Energy, Inc., in Nikiski as District Administration Manager but my background/degree is Secondary Education. I've taught in the classroom and have seen first hand the problems with the system. With homeschooling, we've been able to overcome those and give our son a "world class education" and I'm willing to compare my son's scores with any student in the public system. We believe you'll find that the State of Alaska is getting a tremendous return on it's education dollars that are spent on home schoolers both in terms of better education and more efficient use of the dollars spent by the state on homeschoolers. We believe if you compare all of the homeschool kids in the state to the public system, you'll find the same. Please don't allow the Dept. of Education and Early Development to burden us homeschoolers with the same bureaucratic nightmare as the public system. We urge you to support HB464.

My parents moved to Alaska back in 1966 when I was three, and I've lived and worked all across Alaska thanks to my father being an Alaska State Trooper and my own career path. I've been involved with, and seen first hand the education system from St. Marys to Savoonga, Togiak to Tununak, Anchorage to Alakanuk, Fairbanks to King Salmon, and I can tell you that nobody knows first hand about the education of their children than the local people. The parents of Alaska know their children and their local situation better than anyone in Juneau, and the last thing any of us need is the Department of Education in Juneau or Washington D.C. dictating to us how our children should be educated or how our education dollars should be spent. I remember in Fairbanks as a child when native kids were sent from their villages to Fairbanks or Anchorage to attend elementary school, and always thought it was terrible that they couldn't live and learn in their own community where their parents knew what was best for their children's education. Years ago the State figured it out and now kids go to school in their own villages as they should have been able to from the beginning. We have a diverse population in a huge state - we need to respect that. Please support HB464 and let's keep the Dept. of Education off our backs.

Sincerely,

Bill & Linda Miller  
402 Eadies Way  
Kenai, AK 99611

907-283-2726

**Subject: 4 AAC 33.420-.490 Statewide Correspondence Programs**

**Date: Fri, 1 Mar 2002 21:58:41 -0800**

**From: "Steven Axelson" <saxelson@worldnet.att.net>**

**To: <Representative\_Bill\_Williams@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_Peggy\_Wilson@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_Beth\_Kerttula@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_Bill\_Hudson@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_Albert\_Kookesh@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_Gary\_Stevens@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_Drew\_Scalzi@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_Ken\_Lancaster@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_Mike\_Chenault@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_Joe\_Green@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_Norman\_Rokeberg@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_Andrew\_Halcro@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_Ethan\_Berkowitz@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_Lisa\_Murkowski@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_Eric\_Croft@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_Gretchen\_Guess@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_Leslie\_McGuire@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_Con\_Runde@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_Kevin\_Meyer@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_Brian\_Porter@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_Sharon\_Cissna@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_Harry\_Crawford@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_Eldon\_Mulder@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_Pete\_Kott@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_Fred\_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_Vic\_Kohring@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_Scott\_Ogan@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_Beverly\_Masek@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_John\_Davies@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_Joe\_Hayes@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_Jim\_Whitaker@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_John\_Coghill@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_Hugh\_Fate@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_Jeannette\_James@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_John\_Harris@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_Carl\_Morgan@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_Reggie\_Joule@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_Richard\_Foster@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_Mary\_Kapsner@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_Carl\_Moses@legis.state.ak.us>**

Dear Representative,

We have attached our comments about the proposed legislation above. We appreciate your time. Thank you.

Steve and Nancy Axelson  
Ketchikan

COMMENTS REGARDING NEW STATE REGULATIONS FOR  
CORRESPONDENCE PROGRAMS

February 17, 2002

Steven and Nancy Axelson  
P.O. Box 9029  
Ketchikan, AK 99901  
(907) 225-9778

I am opposed to the potential instatement of regulations 4 AAC 33.421 and 4 AAC 06.450 concerning correspondence programs. The basic function of the existing correspondence programs referred to in these new regulations has been to assist homeschooling families like mine. Many of the new regulations are just adapting the traditional regulations of brick and mortar public schools. Original legislation should be drafted to fit these correspondence programs. It should be a process that involves a cross section of people who rely on the programs, a bottom up approach. Parent/Teachers should play a major role here. Program administrators and school board members need to contribute to make sure legislation will allow for enough leeway to fit their programs unique culture.

I am aware of at least three unique correspondence-homeschool programs being used in the Ketchikan area. REACH, PACE, and IDEA. REACH, Respecting Educational Alternatives & Choices in Homeschooling – the acronym alone couldn't make clearer their mission. The foundation on which the PACE program was built "...offers parents the opportunity to make decisions on how their children are educated (and)...provides alternative choices to the regular school experience." The IDEA program's objective is to "...build and foster a community of learners which views education as not confined to the traditional four walls of a classroom, rather a free-flowing exchange of knowledge and ideas ." Under the "new" proposed top down legislation, existing programs such as these will be re-formed into the generic public schools that the legislation was originally written for.

That being said, however, it is unlikely that legislation drafters will ever undertake such an endeavor. So at the very minimum, here are the areas in the proposed "new" state regulations that must be changed.

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4 AAC 33.421

*(b): The program must conform with statewide goals and performance standards as set out in:  
4AAC 04.010, 4 AAC 04.200*

Regulations 4 AAC 04.010 and 4 AAC 04.200 were designed to facilitate a relationship between the community and the school and protect the students in a public school institution and do not apply correctly to a homeschool situation where a child is most often being taught directly by the parents. This legislation should not be

"borrowed" and adopted for homeschoolers because much of it does not apply and infringes on the very rights that homeschoolers are often practicing when they choose alternative education. 4 AAC 04.010 needs to be rewritten or eliminated, as it was not written with homeschool students in mind. For example, 04 AAC 04.010 (b) (2) reads as follows: "empower the public with the knowledge that the skills and subjects included in this chapter are of great importance to education so that the public can participate in local educational planning with more authority and effect." A homeschool does not need the public "empowered with the knowledge that the skills and subjects of this chapter are of great importance so that the public can participate in local educational planning with more authority and effect". Homeschooling takes the "public" out of the equation and allows parents to be more than just participants. Homeschool parents ARE the educational planners for their children. Another example: 4 AAC 04.200 (a) reads as follows: "Subsections (b) and (c) of this section identify and describe content and performance standards that reflect the highest abilities and qualities of the teaching profession." The list of performance standards in (b) and (c) referred to above is too extensive to copy here. Again, this does not apply to homeschoolers being taught by a parent who has a God-given right to be their child's teacher and does not need to qualify by anyone's criteria or performance standard.

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4 AAC 33.421

*(c): The program must use curriculum materials, including textbooks and other instructional aids, that have been reviewed and selected by the district school board, are of the same quality as those materials that the district offers in the district's other programs, and are in compliance with AS 14.03.090 and AS 14.18.060.*

Here again the legislation is demanding public school legislation standards in my home. AS 14.03.090 reads: "...**partisan, sectarian, or denominational doctrines may not be advocated in a public school** (my home if I'm a part of a correspondence program) **during the hours the school is in session...**" My children are learning from the moment they awake in the morning until the moment they fall asleep at night. I teach my children "when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up" Deuteronomy 5:7. Even with set "school hours" at home this section cannot possibly apply. This subsection must not be passed! The government cannot regulate or limit the religious beliefs, denominational doctrines, partisan or sectarian biases that we wish to represent to, teach to or advocate to our children. As homeschoolers, many of us are teaching our children at home for the very reason that we wish to impart religious biases! We cannot allow the government to intentionally or inadvertently pass legislation that could jeopardize our freedom to influence our children. We are not talking about a hired teacher in a public institution when we are looking at these correspondence programs. We are talking about parents and their children in their own homes. We must be allowed to teach our children whatever we choose, whether the materials we use are purchased by the state or by our own funds.

Each family that chooses to homeschool has their own unique list of reasons why they chose this option. Some of the objections many of us have to the public institutions

will be brought into our homes with the proposed regulations above. As parents we need to be able to maintain control and freedom in choosing the materials we use in teaching our children at home. With the passing of this legislation, the government has the power to prevent me teaching my religion to my family with materials purchased by me in my home.

4AAC 33.421 subsection (h) specifies and regulates the appropriate spending of state funds. I understand that this is necessary and reasonable. It is a completely different issue than approving unfunded materials that are to be used. I am not objecting to the regulations of state funding, but to the regulation of curriculum and course of study as stated again in subsection (g) part 1 and in subsection (d) below:

*4 AAC 33.421*

*(g) The program must include a plan for receiving parental advice and involvement in planning, development, and evaluation of the correspondence study program, including the selection and evaluation of curriculum, teachers, and administrators; the plan must include a signed agreement between the statewide correspondence program certified teacher and the parent, or parents, of each student, the agreement*

- 1) must verify that the curriculum materials and course of study are aligned to state standards and comply with AS 14.03.090 and appropriate for the student;*
- 2) must document the process used to ensure curriculum materials are aligned to state standards and in compliance with AS 14.03.090, including a certified teachers review of all curriculum materials for each student.*

*4 AAC 33.421*

*(d) The program staff, including certified teachers, shall not provide instruction using religious, partisan, sectarian, or denominational curricula purchased privately by the parent, or by the student if the curricula teach particular religious beliefs, or a particular religion as true.*

In (d) above, it is unclear whether the parent teaching the child is considered part of the program staff. If this regulation was interpreted that way then it would again prohibit religious instruction in the home. This regulation needs more clarity.

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The following regulations are proposed that would mandate state testing of the students enrolled in the above programs.

*4 AAC 33.421*

*(f) The district must require enrolled students to participate in the statewide student assessment program as required by 4 AAC 06.710 – 4 AAC 06.790; the program must*  
*(1) have staff inform parents of state testing requirements and the consequences of non-compliance under 4 AAC 33.450*

*4 AAC 33.450*

***FAILURE TO PARTICIPATE IN STATE MANDATED ASSESSMENT TESTS.***

*(a) If a student fails to participate in a state mandated assessment test the student will be ineligible for enrollment in the statewide correspondence program and denied enrollment in*

*any other statewide correspondence program, for the following year, unless the district of enrollment has excused the student from the state mandated assessment.*

This legislation should not be enacted. I understand that if the State is funding a program, they are going to need some way of monitoring and evaluating the program and all participants and staff for assessment. There are adequate provisions in subsection 4 AAC 33.421 (e) to achieve this.

*4 AAC 33.421*

*(e) To ensure the academic progress of enrolled students, the program must include an assessment plan of the same quality as an assessment plan that the district offers in the district's other programs; assessment must include:*

*(1) monitoring of the enrolled student by a certified teacher; the monitoring must include at least monthly review of the student's work and documentation of the certified teacher's review;*

Monthly review is an excessive burden to place on the parent but quarterly review would be sufficient to ensure that academic progress was being made.

Legislation requiring homeschoolers to participate in State testing must not be enacted. Any existing mandates need to be repealed or amended to include a provision for parents to opt out of the tests if they deem this to be best for their child. Giving correspondence program administrators the power to excuse students from testing and then requiring the high percentage of participation as spelled out in AAC 33.421 (f)(3) does not give them the freedom to allow parents/students to opt out of testing. There are legitimate reasons why homeschool parents might not want to participate in the assessment testing.

1. Testing is not an accurate assessment. This is especially true for homeschoolers because they are choosing an unconventional approach to education. One of the biggest benefits of homeschooling is the freedom it gives us to create a scope and sequence (what to teach and at what grade level to teach it) suited to our own children and of our own choosing – not the state's. We are not teaching to the test, nor do we want to be forced to just to prove our performance to the critics. Testing would require homeschool parents to teach what the government decides is appropriate for our kids to learn and at what age they should learn it. This unravels the very fabric of existing correspondence programs stated missions and objectives. And it erodes the very freedom many homeschoolers are trying to exercise. Often the reason a child is in a homeschooling setting, is because the scope or sequence of the public school did not suit the parents or the child. Testing would, in practice, dictate curriculum.

State tests are created to assess the knowledge, understanding, capabilities and advancement of students being taught in an institutionalized setting. Public schools are basically similar across the state and as they are governed by state standards, testing is going to be far more accurate among those who have gone through the system that they were designed to test. Conversely, the cultural atmosphere of a homeschool setting is going to vary greatly from home to home. State tests are going to be biased against this minority background. For example: one of the questions found on the second grade IOWA test of Basic Skills assessment test in the social studies section shows a picture of a chalk board and asks where that particular item would usually be found. The choices

are home, school and two other choices. This question would obviously be biased if "school" were the correct answer. On the IOWA test of Basic Skills test for first graders the same question is asked about a globe. Many homeschoolers have these kinds of resources in their homes and these kinds of questions would not correctly assess their knowledge. This is a good example of how standardized tests are going to be biased against the alternative culture of the homeschooling population.

There is also great controversy among psychologists as to the validity of standardized testing, and whether it does assess ability and knowledge, or rather familiarity and comfort with testing procedures and materials. Not all children are even familiar with the same types of testing procedures let alone the same educational materials. Furthermore, homeschool parents are intimately acquainted with their students and know them and their strengths and weaknesses so well that they often don't feel the need to "test" their knowledge. Consequently, these students are not likely to be as familiar with the whole concept of testing as conventional students. There is a greater range of variance in testing procedures and educational materials in a homeschool setting. There are such a wide array of educational materials available now for homeschoolers that accuracy in testing would be almost impossible. My first grader, who is reading at a third grade level and doing math at a second grade level has never even filled out a bubble answer sheet and may score poorly even on these categories of the tests simply because of the confusing process.

Another problem with standardized testing is that the tests presume a standard of knowledge that homeschoolers might not agree with. For example, most public school textbooks of world history teach that the earth is millions of years old and that dinosaurs were prehistoric animals. I have personally taught my kids a young-earth (only 6 or 7 thousand years old), creation view of history. They have learned that dinosaurs and people were, in fact, on the earth at the same time. That is what we believe based on the Bible. I use this example to show that any test questions about this are going to be religiously biased against my kids. If the tests show that my kids are not educated properly because they didn't "know that people and dinosaurs were not on the earth at the same time" or that certain archaeological findings date people back 12,000 years or more then the tests did not assess their knowledge but their beliefs. This would also be similar to a child taking a standardized test in the 1400's answering the question "what shape is the earth? a) flat b) round etc. One of the reasons I homeschool is because I want to teach my children our personal beliefs which are often not the perspective being taught in the public schools. The tests are going to be biased against this freedom of belief.

2. Testing has psychological ramifications. Many homeschool parents don't want to expose their children to the psychological stress, pressure and labeling of testing. They don't want grades to become the focus of learning nor a tool to alter self-esteem. Rather, they want learning to be a natural gathering of information and skills that the child can learn to use and apply and reason with. They don't want their child to aspire to a goal that is less worthy than the bare achievement of appreciating the world we live in and mastering it...simply a love of learning. To aspire to acquire a letter grade or a high score on a test cheapens and overshadows the goals that some of us want for our children. Many of us homeschool for this very reason. Again, this is yet another instance where

the rules and regulations for public schools cannot be imposed on homeschoolers without encroaching upon the rights we seek to keep.

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Government assisted homeschooling, via the existing correspondence programs, provides a wide range of opportunities that would not otherwise be available and is beneficial to many homeschoolers. Money spent on education in these unique cultural settings (homes) assures the state a continual diverse pool of future Alaskans. Changing or passing legislation that diminishes the difference between public schools and homeschools serves no logical end. Today, Alaska has the best climate for homeschoolers of any state for parents who want to teach their children without government funding or assistance. Why not set this goal for funded homeschool programs too?

**Subject:** CS of HB464

**Date:** Mon, 4 Mar 2002 17:58:47 -0800

**From:** "wagar family" <kwagar@ideafamilies.org>

**To:** <Representative\_Fred\_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us>

I am Kristin Wagar, a homeschooling mom, and want to see a Committee Substitute of HB464 adopted. Our family was homeschooling prior to IDEA and have been with idea since the onset and would like to keep this fine program in place and unchanged.

Thank you,  
Kris Wagar  
1897 Badger Rd.  
North Pole, AK 99705

**Subject: DEED's Proposed Regulations**

**Date:** Mon, 4 Mar 2002 16:12:49 -0900

**From:** "Susan J. Lochner" <susan@bygeorgecreations.com>

**To:** <Senator\_Alan\_Austerman@legis.state.ak.us>, <Senator\_Jerry\_Ward@legis.state.ak.us>, <Senator\_Ben\_Stevens@legis.state.ak.us>, <Senator\_Loren\_Leman@legis.state.ak.us>, <Senator\_Johnny\_Ellis@legis.state.ak.us>, <Senator\_John\_Cowdery@legis.state.ak.us>, <Senator\_Bettye\_Davis@legis.state.ak.us>, <Senator\_Randy\_Phillips@legis.state.ak.us>, <Senator\_Rick\_Halford@legis.state.ak.us>, <Senator\_Georgianna\_Lincoln@legis.state.ak.us>, <Representative\_Pete\_Kott@legis.state.ak.us>, <Representative\_Fred\_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us>

**To: Public representatives and responsible adults for better education**

**From: The Lochner Family**

We support the CHANGES to the DEED's Proposed Regulations that were presented by Jim Foster in Juneau on Friday, March 1, 2002. as outlined below. We find the proposed regulations harmful to our freedom of choice in education. We have found that the homeschooling model and in particular the IDEA format to benefit not only our family directly but also the community of Eagle River in which we live.

Sincerely,

George & Susan Lochner

| DEED's PROPOSED  | GCSD's (or IDEA's) SUGGESTED  |
|--|---|
| <p>4 AAC 33.420(a) A district that proposes to enroll out-of-district students in a state-wide correspondence study program, including a correspondence study program operated by a charter school, must first file an annual application and receive written approval from the department to operate a statewide correspondence study program.</p> <p>(b) The department will approve a district's application if the application satisfactorily demonstrates that the district's proposed statewide correspondence study program complies with the requirements in 4 AAC 33.421.</p> | <p>4 AAC 33.420(a) A district that proposes to enroll out-of-district students in a state-wide correspondence study program, a state supported home school program, or a correspondence study program operated by a charter school, must file an initial application and receive written approval from the department to operate a statewide correspondence study program.</p> <p>(b) The department will approve a district's application if the application satisfactorily demonstrates that the district's proposed state-wide correspondence study program, a state supported home school program, or a correspondence study program operated by a charter school, complies with the requirements in 4 AAC 33.421.</p> <p>(c) Once the initial application is approved, the district's program will be reviewed not</p> |

**Subject:** CS of HB464

**Date:** Mon, 4 Mar 2002 17:58:47 -0800

**From:** "wagar family" <kwagar@ideafamilies.org>

**To:** <Representative\_Fred\_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us>

I am Kristin Wagar, a homeschooling mom, and want to see a Committee Substitute of HB464 adopted. Our family was homeschooling prior to IDEA and have been with idea since the onset and would like to keep this fine program in place and unchanged.

Thank you,  
Kris Wagar  
1897 Badger Rd.  
North Pole, AK 99705

**Subject: InfoExch 03.01.02**

**Date: Tue, 5 Mar 2002 09:08:29 -0900**

**From: "Star Traveler" <startraveler@gci.net>**

**To: <sheila\_box@eed.state.ak.us>**

Please scroll down to the red, I believe there is a statement by DEED on the proposed regs that is misleading in nature re: 14.30.010 and 4 AAC 33.450. The proposed regulations seem to not accomplish anything truly positive whatsoever, and I question the need for their creation at all due to the unkind nature towards home school families that seems to jump out throughout them. The questions and answers do not adequately address, at all, the left field direction these regulations go.

## **Q & A s About Proposed Correspondence School Regulations (this document is from DEED-Sheila Box)**

The State Board of Education & Early Development on November 28, 2001, proposed amendments to 4 AAC 33.420-490, regulations the board first enacted in 1999. The November amendments further define the requirements for the operation by publicly funded school districts of correspondence programs that enroll students from outside a school district's legally defined geographical boundaries. Currently 10 of Alaska's 53 school districts offer such programs and enroll students from outside their districts.

The major features of the proposal:

- requires the school district's certified teaching staff to be involved in grading student homework and in assigning the student's grades,
- sets out required student participation rates on state-mandated assessments,
- sets out consequences for students failing to participate in state-mandated assessments,
- sets out responsibilities of parents and students in regards to participation in state-mandated assessments,
- requires local school boards to be involved in selection of curricular materials, and
- gives school districts guidance on appropriate instructional expenditures for parents.

Q: Why is the state regulating school district correspondence programs?

A: School district correspondence programs that enroll students from outside a school district boundary are a relatively new phenomenon that have relatively few rules placed on them. The state regulates public schools to make certain students get the best education possible and so that all children obtain equitable treatment in public schools.

Q: Are correspondence programs the only non-traditional alternative public school program in Alaska?

A: Correspondence programs are only one type of alternative public school program available in Alaska. Charter schools are another. Other examples of alternatives are Mt. Edgecumbe High School, a boarding school in Sitka, and Alyeska Central School, a statewide correspondence study program operated by the State of Alaska since 1939. The state regulates each program to make sure that students enrolled in the programs receive a high quality education and equitable treatment.

Q: Do these proposed regulations affect all correspondence programs?

A: These proposed regulations affect only correspondence programs operated by Alaska public school districts that enroll students from outside the enrolling school district's boundary.

Q: Does this proposal affect home schools?

A: These proposed regulations do not cover home schools that are exempt from the Compulsory School Attendance Act (AS 14.30.010(12)). Home schools under AS 14.30.010 are exempt from all the laws and regulations that affect public schools. These home schools do not receive any state education funding.

Q: Does the Department of Education & Early Development have plans to regulate home schools that operate under AS 14.30.010?

A: No. The State does not intend to regulate home schools that do not receive state education funding, that is, those that operate under AS 14.30.010.

This does not appear to be a reliable statement - if you look at your proposed reg 33.450, "*If a student fails to take a state-mandated assessment test, the student is ineligible for enrollment in a state-wide correspondence program for the following year...*" I can probably pretty much be assured that if a privately, independently home schooled child's family approaches a state correspondence for enrollment, but has not done any benchmark exams, they will be told they cannot enroll until they have which is a timely punitive denial of education to a child for no reason - this DOES affect families covered under AS 14.30.010 - state funded correspondence schools will cover themselves by refusing enrollment and I believe you know that.

Q: Are students enrolled in school district correspondence programs considered home schools?

A: The State considers all students enrolled in a public school district program as public school students. This is so whether the students attend classes in a school district building or whether they study at home.

Q: May students enrolled in correspondence study programs also enroll in other school programs?

A: Yes. A state law (AS 14.03.095) allows children enrolled in private, home and correspondence programs to enroll as part time students in a public school to enroll in one or more courses. These students are considered public school students while taking their public school classes.

Q: Do the proposed regulations apply to part time public school students?

A: The regulations would apply to the students only when they are taking public school courses. They would not apply when they are taking courses from their private, home, or non-public correspondence study program.

Q: Are school districts required to administer state mandated exams to part time public school students?

A: Yes. All public school students, including part-time students, are administered the state-mandated exams (AS14.03.075, 4AAC 06.730 and .738).

Q: Under the proposed regulations, what happens if a correspondence student does not take a state-mandated exam?

A: The student may be excused from taking the exam by the school district for good cause, as determined by the district. However, if the district does not excuse the student, the student will not be allowed to enroll in that school district s, or any other school district s, correspondence program the following year. The correspondence program is an alternative to the regular public school setting. As an alternative, correspondence programs likely do not meet the needs of every student. If a student cannot demonstrate adequate progress in reading, writing and math on state exams, then perhaps correspondence is not an appropriate alternative for the student. The student may need more attention and supervision that is available in a regular public school, or in a different kind of alternative school setting.

Q: How will parents know when their children are supposed to take a state-mandated assessment?

A: School districts under the proposed regulation will be required to inform parents and students of the dates for student assessments, and the consequences for not taking the exam.

Q: What else will school districts be required to do about assessments under the proposed regulations?

A: The proposed regulation requires school districts to maintain the confidentiality of all test questions on state-mandated exams. This is the same requirement that already has been set for regular school district programs (4 AAC 06.765). To maintain confidentiality, students will need to take state-mandated exams in secure test sites, just like other students. This means correspondence students have to go to a site that has been declared secure by the school district.

Q: How will the state know whether correspondence students are participating in state-mandated exams?

A: Under the proposed regulations, school districts will need to show that the participation rates for students

in the prior years spring administration of state-mandated exams was within 10 percent of the statewide average for all students. If a district's participation rate does not meet that standard, the district risks losing its state approval to operate a correspondence study program that enrolls students outside its boundaries.

Q: Why has the state set such a drastic penalty for non-participation in state exams?

A: Alaska's policy makers have set a goal that all public school students will meet state academic performance standards in reading, writing and math. The progress of students is measured by state exams beginning in the third grade. In addition, students, beginning in 2004, may not receive a high school diploma if they do not pass the Alaska High School Graduation Qualifying Exam. It is important for schools to know whether a student is meeting standards in earlier grades so that students get the help they need early to assure they meet standards, pass the high school exam and earn a diploma.

Q: Are there any other reasons?

A: Publicly funded correspondence programs are alternatives to the regular public school. If a correspondence program cannot demonstrate adequate academic progress of its students in the core skill areas of reading, writing and math on state exams, the effectiveness of the program cannot be judged, nor can the performance of its students.

Q: How will school districts and parents know if students are making adequate academic progress?

A: Each school district needs to develop an assessment plan for its correspondence study program. Both current and proposed regulations require that the plan needs to be of the same quality as the assessment plans for regular district programs.

Q: What is in the assessment plan?

A: The proposed regulation provides further definition for the assessment plan: monitoring of the enrolled student by a certified teacher; a monthly review of student work; documentation of a teacher's review; a record of grades or standards the student has met as determined by a certified teacher and the student's parent; a transcript that denotes the origin of curricular materials for any course other than a district developed course.

The requirement for teacher involvement only applies to the public school correspondence program component of a student's home-school education.

Q: How will the parents of correspondence students be assured of a voice in their children's education?

A: The proposed regulation requires school districts to develop a plan for receiving the advice and involvement of parents in the planning, development and evaluation of the correspondence study program.

Q: What's included in the parent plan?

A: The plan needs to include a signed agreement between the correspondence teacher and the parent of the student. The plan will verify and document that the course of study and curriculum materials are aligned with state academic standards. The plan needs to document the process used to ensure that the curriculum and materials meet state standards. The plan also needs to show that a certified teacher will review curriculum materials for each student's public school correspondence courses.

Q: How will textbooks and curriculum materials be selected for statewide correspondence study programs?

A: A regulation currently in force requires local school boards to review and select texts and materials, and they need to be of the same quality as materials selected in other school district programs. This requirement does not change with the proposed regulations. As with all parts of these regulations, the requirement applies only to a publicly funded and managed correspondence program. The regulation in force and the proposed changes place no restrictions on private courses and materials or instruction by parents or others.

that are not part of the public school correspondence program.

Q: Why do local school boards have to get involved in selecting textbooks and materials?

A: Alaska statute (AS 14.14.090(7) and AS 14.08.111(9)) requires all local school boards to be involved in the selection of texts and curriculum materials for all of their school programs. This includes public school correspondence programs.

Q: Can correspondence study students use texts, instructional aids and other materials that parents select?

A: Yes, if the materials are on the school board's approved list, or are approved by the school district through a district-established process.

Under both the current and proposed regulations, districts are required to assure that curriculum materials are reviewed and selected by the district school board, are of the same quality as those materials that the district

offers in the district's other programs. This proposed regulation does not change this requirement.

Q: What about materials not on the school board's approved list. May parents use them?

A: They may use them, but not during the hours the correspondence school is in session, nor may parents or public schools use state funds to purchase them. Parents may purchase these materials only with their own funds.

Q: What about religious materials. May parents use them?

A: Yes, parents may use religious materials without restriction when used in a non-public school correspondence program.

If used in a public school correspondence program, such material may be used provided the material is not used to advocate a religious point of view. Examples of allowable uses of religious material include as curriculum materials in literature, comparative religion, philosophy and social studies.

The Alaska Constitution (Article VII, Section I) requires all public schools be free from sectarian control. Also, a state law (AS 14.03.90) prohibits public schools from advocating partisan, sectarian or denominational doctrines during the hours a school is in session. The law also states: A teacher or school board violating this section may not receive public money.

Because of this, the proposed regulation prohibits correspondence teachers and other staff from providing instruction using religious, partisan, sectarian or denominational curricula even if purchased privately by the student's parent.

Q: May parents buy religious texts and materials with their personal money?

A: Yes. And they can instruct their children with these materials provided that the instruction is not part of the public school correspondence program, and provided that public school teachers are not involved in that instruction.

Q: May a student receive credit for a course or educational program taken outside of the public school correspondence program?

A: As in any district, parents can apply to the local district for review and acceptance of a learning experience or course taken outside of the district. A district may use criteria and a process of its own design to review and evaluate such work and award appropriate credit. The proposed regulation requires that the source of such course or academic work should be indicated on the student's transcript. This is comparable to current practice in districts when a student transfers from another school and the courses accepted for transfer are listed on the transcript with the name of the school or program identified.

Q: Can public school correspondence programs give money to parents to pay for instructional expenses for their child's education?

A: Yes. School districts generate \$3,200 for each out-of-district correspondence student. And, under current rules, they may allot all or part of that amount for parents. Under the proposed regulation, school districts need to distribute those funds from a fund account.

Q: What rules will apply to funds spent through the fund accounts?

A: The proposed regulations will require that monies from the funds be spent only for the instructional needs of the enrolled child; non-consumable materials purchased are the property of the school district and need to be

returned to the school district when the student exits the correspondence program; and religious, partisan, sectarian or denominational materials may not be purchased.

Under the proposed regulations, the correspondence school will need to provide written guidance to parents and students on what constitutes appropriate and allowable fund expenditures. All expenditures from fund accounts will need the approval of a certified teacher.

In addition, the district may not use the funds from the account to supplant funds for students enrolled in the program under an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP).

NOTE: The Department of Education & Early Development is recommending that the state board further amend the proposed regulation to allow approval by the district as well as or in place of approval by the certified teacher signing the agreement.

Q: Why doesn't the State require school districts to spend the whole \$3,200 on the correspondence program?

A: This subject is not addressed in the current or proposed regulations. However, the State Board of Education & Early Development is investigating this issue now. The reason the board is interested in this matter is because current state law places no requirement on districts to spend the funds generated by out-of-district students in correspondence programs on the correspondence program. Local boards are required by statute to work for the best interest of the students residing within their district boundaries. While some districts may create parent councils for correspondence programs, there is no statutory requirement for such oversight.

Further, parents of out-of-district students may have little or no influence over how state money is spent on their child's program, since parents who reside outside a school district boundaries cannot vote for the school board that sets policies for the correspondence school in which their children are enrolled. The state board may ask the Legislature to become involved in this issue. The state board may ask the Legislature to require districts to spend the funds generated by the statewide correspondence program on the correspondence program in which the child is enrolled.

Q: Does the state have any other responsibility for assuring the quality of public school district correspondence programs?

A: The Department of Education & Early Development under the proposed regulation will have the authority to monitor school districts to make sure they are meeting the provisions of the proposed regulation on correspondence programs that enroll out-of-district students.

Q: Can members of the public comment on the proposed regulation?

A: Yes. Any person may offer comments to the State Board of Education & Early Development.

Q: How can the public comment?

A: You can submit formal comments one of three ways.

1. You may make oral comments at the next meeting of the state board on April 4 from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. in Juneau, State Board Room, Goldbelt Building, 801 W. Tenth St., Juneau. Or you can participate by going to your Legislative Information Office.
2. You may submit written comments no later than 4:30 p.m., on March 4, 2002. Send them to Department of Education & Early Development, Regulations Review, 801 W. Tenth St., Juneau, AK 99801-1894.
3. You may also make comments on the web no later than 4:30 p.m., March 4, 2002. You can find the online form at [www.eed.state.ak.us/reqs](http://www.eed.state.ak.us/reqs). You can also find the proposed regulation at the same online address.

If you need further assistance on making your comments, contact Sheila Box(907) 465-2801, or e-mail

**Subject:** Correspondence Schools

**Date:** Tue, 5 Mar 2002 00:18:18 GMT

**From:** Wohrle <gwohrle@juno.com>

**To:** Representative\_Gretchen\_Guess@legis.state.ak.us,  
Representative\_Lesil\_McGuire@legis.state.ak.us, Representative\_Pete\_Kott@legis.state.ak.us,  
Representative\_Fred\_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us, Representative\_Vic\_Kohring@legis.state.ak.us

Attached is a letter regarding the proposed regulations on Correspondence Schools.  
Thank you for taking the time to read about my concerns.

Julie Wohrle  
Eagle River

I (you) can do all things through CHRIST who stengthens me (you again!).  
Philippians 4:13  
Have a Great day in the Lord!!!  
Jules.....

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|                                      |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| <u>Letter to the legislature.doc</u> | <b>Name:</b> Letter to the legislature.doc<br><b>Type:</b> WINWORD File (application/msword)<br><b>Encoding:</b> base64<br><b>Description:</b> Letter to the legislature.doc<br><b>Download Status:</b> Not downloaded with message |
|--------------------------------------|---|

Dear State Board of Education;

I am a certified teacher who is currently teaching full time in my home. I am homeschooling three of our five children. We have been homeschooling for 8 years; 5 years on our own and the past three years in partnership with I.D.E.A. This program has provided resources that have greatly enriched our children's education, providing the ultimate opportunities for our children as a result of the partnering of families and state.

I.D.E.A. assists the homeschooling community through various aides and support systems. They have designed a unique program that partners w/ parents and students of homeschoolers while maintaining the high standards of the state's requirements. The program's strengths are:

1. REQUIRED Individual Learning Plans
2. FREEDOM to select and order curricular materials to meet my child's ILP's
3. CERTIFIED teacher support and other staff
4. ACCOUNTABILITY through progress reports and follow-up
5. STATE MANDATED TESTING access
6. FINANCIAL ALLOCATIONS to enable families to enrich their teaching opportunities
7. CURRICULUM FAIRS and extensive PO Vendor list
8. PRACTICAL/HELPFUL WORKSHOP opportunities
9. SECONDARY EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES, COUNCILING AND GUIDANCE ie; transcripts, graduation ceremony
10. PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL

**THIS PROGRAM WORKS!!** The scores on the state mandated tests (total averages: State = 61.9% vs. IDEA = 64.5%) are showing that what is currently in place is successful. I find myself asking the question: **"Why change something that works well for ALL parties involved?"**

A few short years ago, our state government granted us incredible freedom as homeschoolers to educate our children unhindered by laws and regulations that had previously been required. By doing so, you in essence, told us that you believed we are able to do our job and do it well w/o unnecessary laws and regulations. This brings me to my second question: **Why has your confidence in our ability to educate our children changed now that we are partnering w/ you through state correspondence schools?**

One main personal concern my husband and I have is centered on curricula choices. We have elected to pay out-of-pocket to purchase Christian curricula for the past 8 years. As I read through the proposed regulations it appears that this freedom is at risk due to restrictions that would be placed on I.D.E.A. teachers. Interfacing (on educational matters) between teacher and family would no longer be allowed if the family were using materials other than secular curricula. One reason we choose to homeschool is to have direct control over the choice of curricula and the type of education our children receive. If this freedom were removed, we would be forced to return to homeschooling our children as we have in the past, w/o partnering w/ the state through the I.D.E.A. program. Our children as well as several hundred others) have indeed been enriched through the opportunities provided through I.D.E.A. We would be very disappointed if we were forced to leave the program due to the proposed regulations.

**If your main concern is indeed the children, then please do not alter and/or impose regulations upon the presently existing I.D.E.A. partnership program!** These changes would only serve to entangle and distract from the services they are presently providing.

Thank you for your attention to my concerns. I trust you will make the decisions that are truly in the best interest of the children of this great state.

Sincerely,

Julie M. Wohrle

**Subject: Proposed DEED reg changes**

**Date: Tue, 5 Mar 2002 13:41:35 -0800**

**From: "Hackworth, Mark A POA02" <Mark.A.Hackworth@poa02.usace.army.mil>**

**To: "'Representative\_Fred\_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us'" <Representative\_Fred\_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us>**

We've homeschooled for 20 years with 5 children and are currently in IDEA under the Galena School system. We have 1 in grad school in Boston, MA, 1 at UAA Anch, and 3 still being schooled in the home. Both of our older children were successful products of homeschooling in spite of our lack of experience. In this competitive world we desire to use the very, very best material that is available in our homeschool program. 20+ years experience has lead us to a combination of nonsecular published material (from HBJ and Scott Foresman that IDEA pays for) and secular published material (from Abeka that we pay for). The proposed DEED regulation changes for correspondence schools (4 AAC 33.420-.490) would not permit us to be enrolled in IDEA with this type of blended material. This issue and others within the proposed changes seem to be an attempt to hold correspondence/homeschools to higher standards than our public school counterparts. If the changes go through as proposed our only option will be one followed by many: drop out of the IDEA program. Please don't change something that has worked so well for us. We've seen the proof in our own children that the system already really does work.

Respectfully yours,

Mark Hackworth

Sharon Hackworth

Corey Hackworth (22 yo)

Zachary Hackworth (19 yo)

Brynna Hackworth (13 yo - 7th grader)

Jesse Hackworth (10 yo - 5th grader)

Makenna Hackworth (8 yo - 2nd grader)

**Subject: Committe Substitute for House Bill 464**

**Date: Tue, 05 Mar 2002 13:39:39 -0900**

**From: Kathryn Freeburg <Katfree3d@gci.net>**

**To: Representative\_Fred\_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us**

Dear Mr. Dyson,

I am writing to ask you to please adopt the committe substitute for House Bill 464. As a homeschool parent with a student in the IDEA program, I would greatly appreciate a timely passage of this committe substitute. Thank you for your time and attention.

Respectfully,  
Kathryn Freeburg

**- Subject: Re: DEED's Proposed Regulations**

**Date:** Tue, 5 Mar 2002 19:48:01 -0900

**From:** "Pawfam" <pawfam@alaska.net>

**To:** <Representative\_Fred\_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_Pete\_Kott@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Senator\_Georgianna\_Lincoln@legis.state.ak.us>, <Senator\_Rick\_Halford@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Senator\_Randy\_Phillips@legis.state.ak.us>, <Senator\_Bettye\_Davis@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Senator\_John\_Cowdery@legis.state.ak.us>, <Senator\_Johnny\_Ellis@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Senator\_Loren\_Leman@legis.state.ak.us>, <Senator\_Ben\_Stevens@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Senator\_Jerry\_Ward@legis.state.ak.us>, <Senator\_Alán\_Austerman@legis.state.ak.us>,  
"Susan J. Lochner" <susan@bygeorgecreations.com>

**CC:** "Shirley Holloway" <shirley\_holloway@eed.state.ak.us>

thank you for your message, I have received several emails with the format of the side by side presented by IDEA. Although you say you are in support of the recommendation made by Jim Foster, I have just a couple of questions for you instead of just the side by side.

in 4AAC33.421 (a) you are suggesting to add the: or a correspondence study program operated by a charter school. Right now the definition for charter school is different than a correspondence school and the funding is different I believe, how would you reconcile this?

in 4AAC33.421 (c) you suggest that districts should establish procedures for the review and selection of materials..... districts are already charged with the responsibility of review of materials not give it away to another procedure, PTA has spent many hours testifying in districts across the state in support of or against a particular piece of proposed curricula. What is the process for you as a parent enrolled in a state wide program with no one school board to appeal to? How do you determine what the budget is and if each student counts as \$3200 how do you know what is being done with the remaining dollars? The legislature has asked all districts to spend not less than 70% of their dollars on instruction. I would not ask for less from any school system, correspondence or brick and mortar.

in 4AAC 33.421 (e) you suggest that quarterly plans are ok

what would you suggest is the best length of time that a students work can go without being reviewed. Quarterly seems to me to be a long time to go to find out that the learning plan is not being followed? And if the parent is not following the plan agreed upon I would like to know what the intervention plans are. If a student is checked only twice in one semester and then decides to return to the local school district the second semester, who has failed this student if they are not up to speed?

in 4AAC33.421 (f) the suggestion is to delete the required assessment percentage of participation of 10%.

I personally have a problem discounting any children in the assessment process. The state of Alaska is serious about raising the bar for all children in the state not just those that are convenient to see and touch. Military children, low socio economic children, immigrant children need to be serviced and counted and assessed and I would not discount correspondence students with a different expectation of participation. In several different places people have suggested ways to leave out children who might do badly on the tests and therefore reflect badly on the schools designation, this makes me angry.

Again I thank you for sending me the side by side and the instructions from your field representative, Sally Javier, we can clearly see that you are organized and receive the same information. It is good campaign work. The discussion will be good and we can only hope to make the decision best for the children. It may require homeschooling parents to do more because some are misusing the system but we are attempting to shore up those holes and develop accountability for all who educate and take the responsibility for educating children.

Paula Pawlowski

----- Original Message -----

From: Susan J. Lochner

To: Senator Alan Austerman@legis.state.ak.us ; Senator Jerry Ward@legis.state.ak.us ;

Senator Ben Stevens@legis.state.ak.us ; Senator Loren Leman@legis.state.ak.us ;  
Senator Johnny Ellis@legis.state.ak.us ; Senator John Cowdery@legis.state.ak.us ;  
Senator Bettye Davis@legis.state.ak.us ; Senator Randy Phillips@legis.state.ak.us ;  
Senator Rick Halford@legis.state.ak.us ; Senator Georgianna Lincoln@legis.state.ak.us ;  
Representative Pete Kott@legis.state.ak.us ; Representative Fred Dyson@legis.state.ak.us  
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2002 4:12 PM  
Subject: DEED's Proposed Regulations

**To: Public representatives and responsible adults for better education**

**From: The Lochner Family**

We support the CHANGES to the DEED's Proposed Regulations that were presented by Jim Foster in Juneau on Friday, March 1, 2002. as outlined below. We find the proposed regulations harmful to our freedom of choice in education. We have found that the homeschooling model and in particular the IDEA format to benefit not only our family directly but also the community of Eagle River in which we live.

Sincerely,

George & Susan Lochner

| DEED's PROPOSED  | GCSD's (or IDEA's) SUGGESTED  |
|--|---|
| <p>4 AAC 33.420(a) A district that proposes to enroll out-of-district students in a state-wide correspondence study program, including a correspondence study program operated by a charter school, must first file an annual application and receive written approval from the department to operate a statewide correspondence study program.</p> <p>(b) The department will approve a district's application if the application satisfactorily demonstrates that the district's proposed statewide correspondence study program complies with the requirements in 4 AAC 33.421.</p> | <p>4 AAC 33.420(a) A district that proposes to enroll out-of-district students in a state-wide correspondence study program, a state supported home school program, or a correspondence study program operated by a charter school, must file an initial application and receive written approval from the department to operate a statewide correspondence study program.</p> <p>(b) The department will approve a district's application if the application satisfactorily demonstrates that the district's proposed state-wide correspondence study program, a state supported home school program, or a correspondence study program operated by a charter school, complies with the requirements in 4 AAC 33.421.</p> <p>(c) Once the initial application is approved, the district's program will be reviewed not more frequently than every ten years as long as the program is designated as distinguished or successful under AS 14.03.123(a).</p> |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>4 AAC 33.421(a)</b> A statewide correspondence study program offered by a district must meet the requirements of this section before its application will be approved by the department.</p>  | <p><b>4 AAC 33.421(a)</b> A state-wide correspondence study program, a state supported home school program, or a correspondence study program operated by a charter school, offered by a district must meet the requirements of this section before its initial application will be approved by the department.</p>   |
| <p><b>4 AAC 33.421(b)</b> The program must conform with statewide goals and performance standards, as set out in 4 AAC 04.010 – 4 AAC 04.200</p>  | <p><b>4 AAC 33.421(b)</b> The program must conform with statewide goals and performance standards, as set out in 4 AAC 04.010 – 4 AAC 04.200</p>  |
| <p><b>4 AAC 33.421(c)</b> The program must use curriculum materials, including textbooks and other instructional aids, that have been reviewed and selected by the district school board, are of the same quality as those materials that the district offers in the district's other programs, and are in compliance with AS 14.03.090 and AS 14.18.060.</p> | <p><b>4 AAC 33.421(c)</b> The district school board must establish procedures for the review and selection of all textbooks and instructional materials that are used within the statewide correspondence program or a state supported home school program to meet the standards. These materials must be of the same quality as those materials that the district offers in the district's other programs, and are in compliance with state law.</p> |
| <p><b>4 AAC 33.421(d)</b> <i>The program staff, including certified teachers, shall not provide instruction using religious, partisan, sectarian, or denominational curricula purchased privately by the parent, guardian of the student, or by the student if the curricula teach particular religious beliefs, or a particular religion, as true.</i></p>   | <p>Delete this section because this is already covered in law.</p>  |
| <p><b>4 AAC 33.421(e)</b> To ensure the academic progress of enrolled students, the program must include an assessment plan of the same quality as an assessment plan that the district offers in the district's other</p>  | <p><b>4 AAC 33.421(e)</b> To ensure the academic progress of enrolled students, the program must include an assessment plan of the same quality as an assessment plan that the district offers in the district's other</p>  |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>programs; <i>assessment must include:</i></p> <p><i>(1) monitoring of the enrolled student by a certified teacher; the monitoring must include at least monthly review of the student's work and documentation of the certified teacher's review;</i></p> <p><i>(2) grades, or standards met, determined and assigned by a certified teacher, after review and consideration of any recommendations submitted by the student and parents.;</i></p> <p><i>(3) a transcript that denotes curricula material origin for any course other than a district developed course.</i></p> | <p>programs; this assessment plan will include:</p> <p>(1) assistance and approval by the district's certified contact teacher in the development of an Individual Learning Plan for each student;</p> <p>(2) at least quarterly contact by the district's certified contact teacher reviewing the parent/ student progress with the Individual Learning Plan. The district certified contact teacher will maintain a record of the contact;</p> <p>(3) the district certified contact teacher will review and approve all grades submitted by the parent for all courses delineated in the student's Individual Learning Plan;</p> <p>(4) the district certified contact teacher will review the required student progress reports submitted by the parent;</p> <p>(5) Delete (3) of DEED's Proposed Regulations</p> |
| <p><b>4 AAC 33.421(f)</b> The district must require enrolled students to participate in the statewide student assessment program as required by 4 AAC 06.710 - 4 AAC</p>   | <p><b>4 AAC 33.421(f)</b> The district must require enrolled students to participate in the statewide student assessment program as required by 4 AAC 06.710 - 4 AAC</p>  |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>06.790; <i>the program must</i></p> <p><i>(1) have staff inform parents of state testing requirements and the consequences of non-compliance under 4 AAC 33.450; and</i></p> <p><i>(2) provide a secure testing facility pursuant to 4 AAC 06.765 to administer all state mandated assessment tests; or enter into agreements with local school districts and those site-based schools to allow statewide correspondence program students to participate in state required testing;</i></p> <p><i>(3) have available to the department, data documenting student participation rates in state required assessments within 10% points of the state average for the prior year's spring test administration.</i></p>   | <p>06.790</p> <p>(1) that parents must sign an affidavit indicating that they understand the state testing requirements and that they will abide by them.</p> <p>(2) provide a secure testing facility pursuant to 4 AAC 06.765 to administer all state mandated assessment tests; or enter into agreements with local school districts and those site-based schools to allow statewide correspondence program students to participate in state required testing;</p> <p>(3) Delete</p>   |
| <p><b>4 AAC 33.421(g)</b> The program must include a plan for receiving parental advice and involvement in planning, development, and evaluation of the correspondence study program, including the</p> <p>selection and evaluation of curriculum, teachers, and administrators; <i>the plan must include a signed agreement between the statewide correspondence program certified teacher and the parent, or parents, of each student; the agreement</i></p> <p><i>(1) must verify that the curriculum materials and course of study are aligned to state standards and comply with AS 14.03.090, and appropriate for the student;</i></p> <p><i>(2) must document the process used to ensure curriculum materials are aligned to state standards and in compliance with AS 14.03.090, including a certified teacher review of all curriculum materials for each student.</i></p> | <p><b>4 AAC 33.421(g)</b> The program must include a plan for receiving parental advice and involvement in planning, development, and evaluation of the state-wide correspondence study program, a state supported home school program, or a correspondence study program operated by a charter school, including the selection and evaluation of curriculum, teachers, and administrators; the plan must include a signed agreement between the statewide correspondence program the district certified contact teacher and the parent, or parents, of each student; the agreement must include the planned course of study and a plan for evaluating student progress, as agreed upon by the parent and the district certified contact teacher.</p> |

*4 AAC 33.421(h) A statewide correspondence program may provide a fund account to parents for the purpose of meeting instructional expenses for the child enrolled in the program; the following requirements apply to the fund account:*

*(1) expenditures from statewide correspondence fund accounts must be for the student's instructional needs only;*

*(2) materials purchased with state funding are property of the program; non consumable materials must be returned to the program when the student exits the program for any reason;*

*(3) religious, partisan, sectarian, or denominational materials may not be purchased with account funds;*

*(4) the program must provide written guidance, consistent with this chapter, on what constitutes appropriate and allowable expenditures of the fund accounts;*

*(5) all expenditures from the fund account must be approved by the certified teacher signing the student's plan; and*

*(6) the fund account may not be used either by the district or the parent to*

*supplant district funds or obligations for IEP services.*

**4 AAC 33.421(h)** A state-wide correspondence study program, a state supported home school program, or a correspondence study program operated by a charter school, may provide a fund account to parents for the purpose of meeting instructional expenses for their students enrolled in the program; the following requirements apply to the fund account:

(1) expenditures from statewide correspondence fund accounts must be for student instructional needs; as referenced on the learning plan agreed upon by the parent and the district certified contact teacher;

(2) materials purchased with state funding are property of the program; non consumable materials must be returned to the program when the student exits the program for any reason;

(3) religious, partisan, sectarian, or denominational materials may not be purchased with account funds;

(4) the program must provide written guidance, consistent with this chapter, on what constitutes appropriate and allowable expenditures of the fund accounts;

(5) each district must develop a process by which approval for expenditures from the fund account is given.

(6) Drop; already law.

**4 AAC 33.450. FAILURE TO PARTICIPATE IN STATE MANDATED ASSESSMENT TESTS.** (a) *If a student fails to participate in a state mandated assessment test the student will be ineligible for enrollment in the statewide correspondence program and denied enrollment in any other statewide correspondence program, for the following year, unless the district of*

Delete this section or treat correspondence or state supported home school students the same as you do all other public school students attending traditional schools.

*enrollment has excused the student from the state mandated assessment.*

Your PAC –

| <b>Fname</b>      | <b>L Name</b>  | <b>Email</b>   |
|-------------------|----------------|--|
| <b>Pam</b>        | <b>Raygor</b>  | <a href="mailto:wdezarn@ideafamilies.org">wdezarn@ideafamilies.org</a> |
| <b>Diana</b>      | <b>Gamez</b>   | <a href="mailto:adgamez@ptialaska.net">adgamez@ptialaska.net</a>       |
| <b>Marie</b>      | <b>Wyman</b>   | <a href="mailto:dmwyman@ideafamilies.org">dmwyman@ideafamilies.org</a> |
| <b>Denise</b>     | <b>Meehan</b>  | <a href="mailto:tmeehan@ideafamilies.org">tmeehan@ideafamilies.org</a> |
| <b>Pam</b>        | <b>Johnson</b> | <a href="mailto:johnson@ideafamilies.or">johnson@ideafamilies.or</a>   |
| <b>Gena</b>       | <b>Graves</b>  | <a href="mailto:rbgraves@gci.net">rbgraves@gci.net</a>                 |
| <b>Susan</b>      | <b>Kiggins</b> | <a href="mailto:mkiggins@ideafamilies.or">mkiggins@ideafamilies.or</a> |
| <b>Alternates</b> |                |  |
| <b>Peggie</b>     | <b>Watson</b>  | <a href="mailto:pegnwayn@acsalaska.net">pegnwayn@acsalaska.net</a>     |

Your Field Rep – Sally Javier - [Sally@ideafamilies.org](mailto:Sally@ideafamilies.org)  
Your Director – Steve Musser - [Stevedm@ideafamilies.org](mailto:Stevedm@ideafamilies.org)  
Executive Assistant - Carol Simpson - [Carols@ideafamilies.org](mailto:Carols@ideafamilies.org)  
Assistant Superintendent - Jim Foster - [Jimfc@galenanet.net](mailto:Jimfc@galenanet.net)

Write to –

- The State Board of Education -submit an email on the website (scroll to bottom of this page) <http://www.eed.state.ak.us/rees/>
- Write individually to the State Board of Education Members by email [http://www.eed.state.ak.us/state\\_board/MEMLIST.HTML](http://www.eed.state.ak.us/state_board/MEMLIST.HTML)
- Submit an email to your Legislator - <http://www.legis.state.ak.us/Legdist/22/legdist22.htm>
- Send comments to your legislator by faxing or calling in a POM (Public Opinion Message) of 50 words or less. Form - <http://www.legis.state.ak.us/info/docs/pomform.pdf>

Thank you all for all you do!

Sincerely,  
Sally Javier  
IDEA Field Rep. - Region A

**Subject:** HB 464

**Date:** Wed, 06 Mar 2002 20:57:57 -0900

**From:** FAMILY TOLLEFSRUD <zodama@ptialaska.net>

**Organization:** Treehouse Productions

**To:** Homer\_LIO@legis.state.ak.us

Greetings,

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House HRS Committee on HB 464, dated March 7, 2002. THANK YOU!! My testimony is as follows:

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are home school parents involved in the I.D.E.A. program which, as you may know, is a Statewide educational correspondence program based out of Galena. We are also the proud parents of a 10 year old daughter who, last year, scored in the 98th percentile overall in the National 4th grade benchmark exams as well as professional educators. We are writing today to ask you to adopt the CS (Committee Substitute) of HB464 and encourage the timely passage of this bill.

Respectfully,

DeWaine and Jane Tollefsrud  
PO Box 3307  
2465 Mount Augustine Drive  
Homer, AK 99603  
(907) 235-7262

Also attached is a letter addressed to the Dept. of Education and Early Development that outlines our major concerns about the original language of HB 464. The letter begins below:

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are home school parents involved in the I.D.E.A. program which is a Statewide educational correspondence program based out of Galena. We are writing to you today to express our concerns about proposed regulations that would affect home schooling in Alaska. We are asking that you do not approve these regulations as written as they would greatly restrict our ability to educate our child.

As parents of a 10 year old daughter who, last year, scored in the 98th percentile overall in the National 4th grade benchmark exams and as professional educators we appreciate the intent of the new proposed regulations but strongly disagree with its verbiage. We have concerns about the reasons why our program is being held to different standards than other educational programs.

IDEA needs to submit an annual application. Charter School need only apply every ten years.

New regulations would require "[Assessment] by certified teacher once a month". This would be comparable to requiring monthly conferences with teachers in public school.

New regulations would also require; "A transcript that denotes curricula material origin...". This is already being done for course work that requires texts but would unduly limit

individually designed curricula. As professional educators this is distressing to us. In no other program is this reviewed. Instead, how about "How does curricula material align with the standards"?

"...certified teacher review of all curriculum material for each student.."Why does a certified teacher need to review all curriculum materials? As above.

"...data documenting student participation rates in the state required assessments within 10% points of the state average..." We are the only program in the state with this regulation.

The proposed new regulations are written as if our children's education is "at risk." It most assuredly is not! The State benchmark assessments show us to be comparable with other districts.

We recognize that the intent of these new regulation may have been to clarify already existing programs but if we all agree that parental involvement in the education of our children is a good thing then regulations should be made to facilitate that involvement rather than hinder it. Holding Statewide correspondence courses, such as I.D.E.A. to a higher standard than other programs is not only burdensome to the parent but is absolutely inappropriate.

Please do not approve the regulations as originally proposed. We urge you to consider instead the revised language as presented in the CS of HB 464.

Respectfully,

DeWaine and Jane Tollefsrud  
PO Box 3307  
2465 Mount Augustine Drive  
Homer, AK 99603  
(907) 235-7262

CS for HB 464

**Subject: CS for HB 464**

**Date:** Wed, 6 Mar 2002 22:52:11 -0800

**From:** "sterling & kaari bouma" <sbouma@ideafamilies.org>

**To:** <Homer\_LIO@legis.state.ak.us>

Dear Sirs,

**I am asking you to adopt the Committee Substitute for HB 464 and to pass the legislation quickly.**

We have so many problems with the proposed changes to the regulations for Home School and Charter School and Statowide Correspondence School that we **urge** you to pass instead the CS for HB 464. The regulation changes will go through as is, with no vote, unless you take up our cause.

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House HES Committee on HB 464, dated March 7, 2002.

Sterling and Kaari Bouma  
4712 Rochelle Road  
Homer, Alaska 99603  
907-235-1988  
IDEA--Interlor Distance Education of Alaska

HB464

**Subject: HB464****Date: Thu, 7 Mar 2002 01:27:06 EST****From: Kathaber@aol.com****To: Homer\_LIO@legis.state.ak.us**

Dear Representatives:

Please consider favorably your support for HB464. My son is thriving in IDEA and feel that this bill will be effective in enhancing its, and my son's, successes.

We are so impressed with the support from the caring, committed staff at IDEA. Whenever I have any questions my contact teacher gets takes my call or gets back to me immediately. This individual attention is precisely why we chose this type of instruction for our son. He is exceeding by one entire grade children his same age in public school.

IDEA does an outstanding job of curricula presentation, teacher/parent workshops on everything from science to literature to writing to whatever we request and general materials availability. Because we are in such close contact via the internet, more info regarding state and national art contests, geography competitions, spelling bees, writing assignments and science fairs reach us in time to participate, learn, benefit from and often win. Having a computer to access the internet opens a whole world of current information rich with sound, facts, photos and videos of any subject under the sun.

Please vote for HB464.

Thank you,  
Kathryn Haber

**Subject: RE: DEED's Proposed Regulations**

**Date:** Tue, 5 Mar 2002 22:06:28 -0900

**From:** "rues" <rues@gci.net>

**To:** "Susan J. Lochner" <susan@bygeorgecreations.com>,  
<Senator\_Alان\_Auerman@legis.state.ak.us>, <Senator\_Jerry\_Ward@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Senator\_Ben\_Stevens@legis.state.ak.us>, <Senator\_Loren\_Leman@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Senator\_Johnny\_Ellis@legis.state.ak.us>, <Senator\_John\_Cowdery@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Senator\_Bettye\_Davis@legis.state.ak.us>, <Senator\_Randy\_Phillips@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Senator\_Rick\_Halford@legis.state.ak.us>, <Senator\_Georgianna\_Lincoln@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_Pete\_Kott@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_Fred\_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us>

Dear George and Susan,

Thanks for taking the time to comment on the proposed correspondence school regs. I will carefully consider your comments and suggestions.

Some provisions may need clearer language (there seems to have been some misunderstanding of the intent of some of the provisions) and there is on-going discussion about some provisions such as how often it is reasonable for homeschooling parents and students to check in with the certified teachers.

Thanks again for your comments and for taking such an active role in your children's education.

Sincerely,

Sally

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Susan J. Lochner [mailto:susan@bygeorgecreations.com]

**Sent:** Monday, March 04, 2002 4:13 PM

**To:** Senator\_Alان\_Auerman@legis.state.ak.us; Senator\_Jerry\_Ward@legis.state.ak.us; Senator\_Ben\_Stevens@legis.state.ak.us;  
Senator\_Loren\_Leman@legis.state.ak.us; Senator\_Johnny\_Ellis@legis.state.ak.us; Senator\_John\_Cowdery@legis.state.ak.us;  
Senator\_Bettye\_Davis@legis.state.ak.us; Senator\_Randy\_Phillips@legis.state.ak.us; Senator\_Rick\_Halford@legis.state.ak.us;  
Senator\_Georgianna\_Lincoln@legis.state.ak.us; Representative\_Pete\_Kott@legis.state.ak.us;  
Representative\_Fred\_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us

**Subject:** DEED's Proposed Regulations

**To: Public representatives and responsible adults for better education**

**From: The Lochner Family**

We support the **CHANGES** to the DEED's Proposed Regulations that were presented by Jim Foster in Juneau on Friday, March 1, 2002. as outlined below. We find the proposed regulations harmful to our freedom of choice in education. We have found that the homeschooling model and in particular the IDEA format to benefit not only our family directly but also the community of Eagle River in which we live.

Sincerely,

George & Susan Lochner

|                 |                              |
|-----------------|------------------------------|
| DEED's PROPOSED | GCSN's (or IDEA's) SUGGESTED |
|-----------------|------------------------------|

**Subject: Fw: HB 464**

**Date:** Thu, 7 Mar 2002 10:20:56 -0900

**From:** "Tom & Grace Huhndorf" <thuhndorf@ideafamilies.org>

**To:** <Representative\_Fred\_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us>

**CC:** <Representative\_Peggy\_Wilson@legis.state.ak.us>

----- Original Message -----

From: Tom & Grace Huhndorf

To: Anchorage\_LIO@legis.state.ak.us

Cc: Cordova\_LIO@legis.state.ak.us

Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2002 10:18 AM

Subject: HB 464

Andrea Grace Huhndorf  
POBOX 211826  
7520 E. 34th Street  
Anchorage, AK. 99521  
907-333-3047

I am currently home schooling; I am enrolled with IDEA.

Hello, I am writing to document my support of HB 464. I agree with Carol Simpson in Homer.

AGH

**Subject: HB 464**

**Date:** Thu, 7 Mar 2002 10:50:10 -0900

**From:** "sells-steinmetz" <msteinmetz@ideafamilies.org>

**To:** <Representative\_Fred\_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us>

My name is Martina Steinmetz, I live in Bird Creek, Alaska (HCR 52 BOX 8618/907-653-1999) and am currently homeschooling my two boys, 7 and 8 years old.

I am writing to you in support of the Committee Substitute of HB 464.

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House HES Committee on HB 464, dated March 7, 2002.

Best regards, Martina Steinmetz

**Subject: HB464**

**Date: Thu, 07 Mar 2002 20:25:30 GMT**

**From: "Alan McCollough" <kittycat@kittycatonline.com>**

**To: Representative\_Fred\_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us**

To: Representative Fred Dyson

March 7th, 2002

Please pass HB464!

As a parent of a daughter who my wife and I school via IDEA's coorespondence program, I am asking you to pass HB464 so that Rachel, our daughter, can continue to thrive. Without the passage of HB464, Rachel will be subjected to the very thing we are trying to avoid, unwelcome government intrusion into her schooling.

IDEA has been a fantastic program for our Rachel, and I personally believe that without HB464, meddlers in the public education arean will fight tooth and nail to see that programs such as IDEA are targeted for "special treatment" in the form of unreasonable scrutiny, stifiling regulations, and general harassment at the hands of bueraucrats.

Thank you, Fred, for your consideration.

Alan McCollough  
4233 Apollo Dr.  
Anchorage, AK 99504  
tel: 907-337-7608



# Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the HHESS  
 committee name  
 committee on HB464, dated 3-7-02  
 bill/subject

Jeff & Donna Offord  
 PO Box 8772:4  
 Wasilla, AK 99687  
 907-376-0256

Dear House HES Committee:

I am writing to ask that you please adopt the CS(Committee Substitute) of HB 464. I am part of the IDEA program and have found them very helpful in my homeschooling. They have lots of opportunities for learning and are so helpful as we teach our children. I appreciate this program very much and think it has helped many homeschooling families to be able to expand their curriculum and activities.

Sincerely,

Donna Offord

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House HES Committee on HB 464, dated March 7, 2002.

Re: HB 464

**Subject: Re: HB 464**

**Date:** Wed, 6 Mar 2002 20:26:22 -0800

**From:** "Gerald & Lana Gooding" <glgooding@pci.net>

**To:** <Representative\_Fred\_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us>

Our son is a homeschool student enrolled through IDEA. We urge adoption of the CS of HB464.

Gerald & Lana Gooding  
Eagle River, Alaska

**Subject: HB464****Date:** Wed, 6 Mar 2002 19:47:00 -0900**From:** "Tim and Chris Scott" <fishin4men@gci.net>**To:** "Fred Dyson" <Representative\_Fred\_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us>,  
"Gary Stevens" <Representative\_Gary\_Stevens@legis.state.ak.us>,  
"John Coghill" <Representative\_John\_Coghill@legis.state.ak.us>,  
"Peggy Wilson" <Representative\_Peggy\_Wilson@legis.state.ak.us>,  
"Reggie Joule" <Representative\_Reggie\_Joule@legis.state.ak.us>,  
"Vic Kohring" <Representative\_Vic\_Kohring@legis.state.ak.us>,  
<Representative\_Sharon\_Cissna@legis.state.ak.us>

Greetings to all of you,

First of all I need to apologize for not making the LOI teleconference in Anchorage on Thursday, March 7 but I have one child at the Benchmark testing site, one at piano lessons and the other at voice lessons. As you can see, I am the mother of 3 children, 2 of which I home school in partnership with IDEA. The other is a sophomore at Chugiak H.S. where she just received her letter for academic honors. She had previously been an independent home schooler.

I wrote on Monday supporting HB464. After reading the changes proposed by Representative Dyson, I would like to state that I am in full support of the committee substitute of HB464. I appreciate the support that the legislators are giving to the strong home schooling contingency of Alaska. The sole concern that my husband and I have is that our children can have the best education that we, as parents, can provide for them. The partnership that is made possible through the Galena School District is really the best of all worlds. It is a win, win, win situation. A win for the state, a win for the school district, a win for the parents and especially a win for the children. Thank you again for assisting us in making their education a priority.

Sincerely,  
Christina Scott  
696-2956  
fishin4men@gci.net



# Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House HESS  
 committee name  
 committee on HB 464, dated 3/7/02  
 bill/subject

**Subject: Consideration of HB464**  
**Date: Thu, 07 Mar 2002 09:00:42 -0900**  
**From: Dawne Yaskus <yaskus@mtaonline.net>**  
**To: MatSu\_LIO@legis.state.ak.us**

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House HES Committee on HB 464, dated March 7, 2002.

To the House HES Committee Members:

My name is Dawne Yaskus and I am in the I.D.E.A. program. The continuation and longevity of the program as it stands is of great concern to me. The I.D.E.A. program has proven to be a stable, secure and highly beneficial means of educating my children. With the Department of EED's proposed changes, great limitations and constraints would be placed on the education of my child that WOULD NOT benefit either my child or the I.D.E.A. program. I ask that you consider and adopt the Committee Substitute for HB464 in a timely manner to ensure that the regulatory abilities of the Department of EED be limited and for the successful continuation of the I.D.E.A. program.

Thank you for your time,

Dawne Yaskus  
 P.O. Box 521799  
 Big Lake, AK 99652

(907) 892.1426

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Testifier  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Representing (Optional)  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone No.



# Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House HESS  
 committee name  
 committee on HB 464, dated 3/7/02  
 bill/subject

Committee Substitute of HB464

**Subject: Committee Substitute of HB464**  
**Date: Thu, 07 Mar 2002 10:57:27 -0900**  
**From: "Stephanic Olson" <sbritton@idcafamilies.org>**  
**To: MatSu\_LIO@legis.state.ak.us**

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House HES Committee on HB464, dated March 7, 2002.

House HES Committee Members,

I am sending this e-mail regarding the Committee Substitute of HB464. As a parent of an I.D.E.A. student I strongly support this bill and request a timely passage of the Committee Substitute of HB464.

Thank you for your time and consideration concerning correspondence programs and HB464.

Stephanie Olson  
 P.O. Box 940061  
 Houston, AK  
 (907) 892-2015  
 I.D.E.A.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Testifier  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Representing (Optional)  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone No.

March 7, 2002

**HES Committee Members**

Please enter into the record testimony to the house HES Committce on HB464 to be taken March 7, 2002. T... from Richard and Sheila Sparks.

Please adopt the CS of HB 464.

Name: Richard and Sheila Sparks  
Address: Solo Creek, White River, Alaska  
And  
3050 Caskill, Wasilla, Alaska  
Phone: 907 357-4281  
Program: IDEA (Interior Distance Education of Alaska)

I do believe it would be extremely detrimental to my son Forest's studies and interest in school if he were not able to enjoy his curriculum. We don't use many items with religious content but I feel it should be my right to do so if we purchase the items ourselves. One of the reasons we choose to home school Forest, other than the fact that we live away from any schools, is the ability to purchase our own curriculum. When we read bedtime stories they are often bible stories. Would this mean we couldn't read religious stories to our son? I consider any restriction on the schooling process. We feel this proposed regulation would be against our constitutional rights.

We don't have a problem with teacher interaction but who would pay for the contact. We are often at our home in the Wrangell Mountains. To get to our home we charter a plane, which usually runs about 450. or more. Who would pay to get a teacher into our home? There is not any road access. We could not possibly afford to pay this on our limited income.

I think the teacher already approves allotment expenditures since we have to put subjects and methods/use of materials on the Individual Learning Plan.

Regarding the State mandated tests, what if a child has been ill and hasn't been able to take the test. Why should a child be punished by losing their ability to be home schooled? If a child were sickly they would miss even more school in public school and fall even further behind.

Having a participation rate for testing is foolish. If a certain rate of enrollment is required and the enrollment rate is lower than all of those who still chose to home school would be penalized.

Sincerely

Richard and Sheila Sparks

**Subject: Adopt Committee Substitute of HB464**

**Date:** Wed, 6 Mar 2002 21:03:06 -0900

**From:** "The Wyman Family" <bmwyman@ideafamilies.org>

**To:** <Representative\_Fred\_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us>

Dear Mr. Dyson,

We are a home schooling family enrolled in the IDEA program with GCSD.

I am writing to respectfully request that you please adopt the Committee Substitute of HB464. I would further request a timely passage of this bill.

This is an important issue that many people care about.

I respectfully request that you inform your committee of my message.

Most sincerely,

Guadalupe M. Wyman

**Subject: hb464**

**Date:** Wed, 06 Mar 2002 22:23:48 -0900

**From:** david dorland <dorlandfamily@gci.net>

**To:** Representative\_Fred\_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us

Dear Rep. Dyson,

I am a concerned homeschool parent with IDEA. Please adopt CS HB464. We need your help to continue educating our children the best way we know how.

Sincerely,  
Janet Dorland

**Subject: House Bill 464**

**Date:** Thu, 7 Mar 2002 06:51:39 -0900

**From:** "Richard Hand" <rhand@ideafamilies.org>

**To:** <Representative\_Fred\_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us>

**CC:** <Jason\_Hooley@legis.state.ak.us>

Representative Dyson

It has come to my attention that you are attempting to adopt a Committee Substitute proposal for HB464. If this is true, please accept my wholehearted support for your efforts.

I recently attended a briefing concerning EDU initiatives to place additional constraints on public funded home schooling programs, and I am not pleased. My family participates in the IDEA program, and I believe in its current form it is the best educational vehicle available in America.

I am a LtCol in the USAF flying F-15s. This line of work has caused the family to move 10 times in the last 16 years making education of the children a challenge. We adopted home schooling in 1987 and have never looked elsewhere. Alaska's public support for out of district educational programs greatly enhances this choice of schooling, and in the process, producing world-class students and future adult citizens.

Am I qualified to comment on the merits of the Alaskan Educational system? I will let you decide. I do pay taxes and vote. I do have children in the IDEA program. I am a product of some private and public education in the K-12 grades, and I have a degree in Aerospace Engineering along with three additional Masters Degrees. With this background, and having lived on 5 different continents and 18 different states, I emphatically promote the IDEA program in its current form without additional constraints.

I have specifically avoided the urge to tout my children's accomplishments - most made possible by the IDEA program and funding (the boastful parent rarely comes across in a good light). Please accept my word that they are significant. I welcome the opportunity to assist you with your efforts and can be reached during the day at (907) 552-2704.

Thank You,  
Richard Hand  
Palmer, AK



State Of Alaska  
Legislative Affairs Agency  
Kenai LIO  
145 Main St Lp, Ste 217  
Kenai, AK 99611  
907-283-2030

Date: 3-7-02

Please accept the enclosed original(s) of written testimony for  
the House HESS teleconference hearing that was  
scheduled on 3-7-02.

A copy of this testimony was transmitted to your committee via  
fax on 3-7-02 1:20 PM

4:55 pm  
4:40 pm

Thank You,

W. Byrme



# Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House HESS  
committee name

Committee on HB 464, dated March 7, 2002  
bill # / subject

I am in favor of HB 464 and would like to see it passed without further delay.  
I am a homeschool parent and feel this bill benefits all Alaskan homeschoolers.

Thank you

Signed: Oma R. Murdoch  
Testifier

IDEA Parent  
Representing (optional)

37464 Riverbend Dr Soldotna, AK 99669  
Address

907-262-1947  
Phone number



# Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House HESS  
committee name

Committee on HB 464, dated March 7, 2002  
bill # / subject

I am completely in support of the Committee Substitute for HB 464 and request that this legislation is passed quickly.

Signed: Janice Habermann  
Testifier

Self  
Representing (optional)

36790 Steadman Street Soldotna, AK 99669  
Address

(907) 262-3704  
Phone number



# Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House HESS  
committee name

Committee on HB 464, dated March 7, 2002  
bill # / subject

Thank you for taking the time to consider the importance of the passage of this bill HB464. It is vitally important for this to pass in order to maintain the integrity and the high standards that homeschoolers have imposed upon themselves.

Signed: Tami Johnson  
Testifier

IDEA Parent  
Representing (optional)

51835 Pioneer St Kenai, AK 99611  
Address

907-776-5597  
Phone number



# Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House HESS  
committee name

Committee on HB 464, dated March 7, 2002  
bill # / subject

I have been homeschooling my two children for the past 4 years and have found it to be the single most rewarding thing that I do. As a parent who started out sending my children to traditional school I was frustrated with the fact that my son was very bright but needed to be challenged and my daughter needed extra help and there just wasn't enough time in the school day to take her aside and help her. Because IDEA allows me to choose all of the curriculum that my children need I have been able to formulate an education specifically targeted to each of their strengths and weaknesses. If the committee substitute of HB 464 does not pass the Alaska State Department of Education is going to institute changes in how homeschooling is done in all State funded homeschool programs. I will not be able to use many of the curricular materials that I have long found to be successful for my children because some of them are religious in nature. I strongly believe in the right to educate my own children and if HB 464 does not pass and the department of education chooses to pass their new rulings then I will be forced to pull my children from participation in any state funded homeschool program and educate them independently. Further more, I am getting really tired of having to defend the IDEA's homeschool policies every couple of years. The state department of education has come up with something new to try and gain greater control of state wide homeschool programs every two to three years for as long as I can remember. I believe HB 464 will effectively put a stop to parents having to constantly worry each year if they will have to change the way that they do things again. In closing I would like to say that the IDEA program has helped my children and I tremendously with everything from curriculum choices to giving the kids walking stick bugs for pets. My children are figure skaters and the IDEA staff are always interested in what new accomplishments they have achieved and where they will be competing next. The teachers are always available to meet with parents and are open and supportive as well as insightful. I do not see how making more restrictions on a highly successful program can help them or be beneficial in any way. IDEA is already a fantastic program and it's policies are there for the good of the children and their education, not the money.

Signed: Cathy Shearer  
Testifier

IDEA Parent  
Representing (optional)

P.O. Box 1 Sterling, AK 99672  
Address

(907) 262-7040  
Phone number



# Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the \_\_\_\_\_ House HESS  
committee name

Committee on \_\_\_\_\_ HB 464 \_\_\_\_\_, dated \_\_\_\_\_ March 7, 2002 \_\_\_\_\_  
bill # / subject

Dear Committee members:

I urge you to adopt the Committee Substitute on HB 464 and incorporate it as soon as possible.

Thank you very much.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Marjie Dempster  
Testifier

\_\_\_\_\_ Self  
Representing (optional)

\_\_\_\_\_ 37930 Highcrest Ln Sterling, AK 99672  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_ (907) 262-7079  
Phone number