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While increasing the funding to McKinney-Vento in order to include youth in out-of-home care would support transportation and liaison staffing costs, ensuring access to Title I, Part A services would provide for additional support, such as tutoring, that directly affects academic growth and progress.

In addition, according to Title I, Part A regulations, states must include homeless students in their academic assessment, reporting, and accountability systems. Eligibility for Title I, Part A services for youth in foster care means that outcome data on their educational attainment could be collected and their progress tracked. Collaborative data systems to track education outcomes would be tremendously helpful to both the education and child-welfare systems.

2) Increase funding for the Elementary and Secondary School Counseling Programs (ESSCP) under Title V, Part D, Subpart 2.

Research confirms the intuitive conclusion that children with multiple academic risk factors who do not have stable adults in their lives to guide their education rarely succeed in school and beyond. Conversely, when such children are provided structured supports, their educational and other outcomes improve markedly. This is particularly true for students in foster care. Yet the students who most need school counselors to help them navigate the requirements of academic and adult success have the least access to structured educational support.

Typically, this support role is filled by school guidance counselors, who also work with classroom teachers to prevent or deal with behavioral problems. Counselors also help to connect students to postsecondary financial aid opportunities and are usually the point of contact between the school and outside agencies that have, or need to have, a role in a student's life.[45]

In schools that serve disadvantaged children, the number of students assigned to a full- or part-time counselor already exceeds the American School Health Association's recommended ratio, 250:1, by a factor

[45] Committee for Education Funding (2006). *Budget Response FY2007*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved April 16, 2006, from http://www.nabe.org/documents/policy_legislative/CEF_Response_FY07.pdf

of anywhere from three to 50 (i.e., 750:1 on up to 12,500:1).[46] NCLB adopted ASHA's ratio, but the resources it devotes to school counseling are inadequate for increasing the supply of qualified elementary and secondary school counselors, let alone for improving services and coordinating with nonschool agencies.

ESSCP provides competitive grants to school districts to establish or expand school counseling services through qualified school counselors, social workers, and psychologists—all of whom provide services that play a vital role in improving educational outcomes for youth in foster care and other students with multiple risks. Grants also support professional development for these personnel. In addition, the program promotes school-linked integration of services and requires collaboration with other social service agencies, public or private entities and business, community and higher education institutions.

Currently funded at just under $35 million,[47] ESSCP grants are for a maximum of $400,000 per fiscal year and may not exceed three years. Not surprisingly, then, ESSCP presently benefits only 103 school districts spread out over 33 states and the District of Columbia, a reach that falls far short of current need (even without including the population in foster care). Increasing current appropriations would be a positive start toward demonstrating a commitment to support services for all youth at risk of academic failure, including youth in foster care.

3) Increase funding for Grants to Improve the Mental Health of Children under Title V, Part D, Subpart 14 and target funding to high-poverty school districts.

Because such a high proportion of youth in foster care face mental health challenges that affect their school performance, mental health services are vital. Both the education and child-welfare communities are striving to coordinate services to improve the educational outcomes of children and youth in foster care with mental health needs, but much

[46] Wolanin, 2005; McDonough, P. *Counseling and college counseling in America's high schools*. Alexandria, VA: National Association for College Admission Counseling. Retrieved March 15, 2007, from www.nacac.com/downloads/p2_counseling.pdf

[47] At this funding level, the law requires that funds be used for counselors only in elementary schools, not in secondary schools. The current appropriations threshold that would enable districts to allocate funds for secondary school counselors is $40 million.

remains to be done. This Title V provision supports the education community in this work. It authorizes the U.S. Secretary of Education to make funding arrangements, on a competitive basis, with state or local educational agencies or Indian tribes for the purpose of increasing student access to high-quality mental health care by developing innovative programs to link local school systems with the local mental health system.

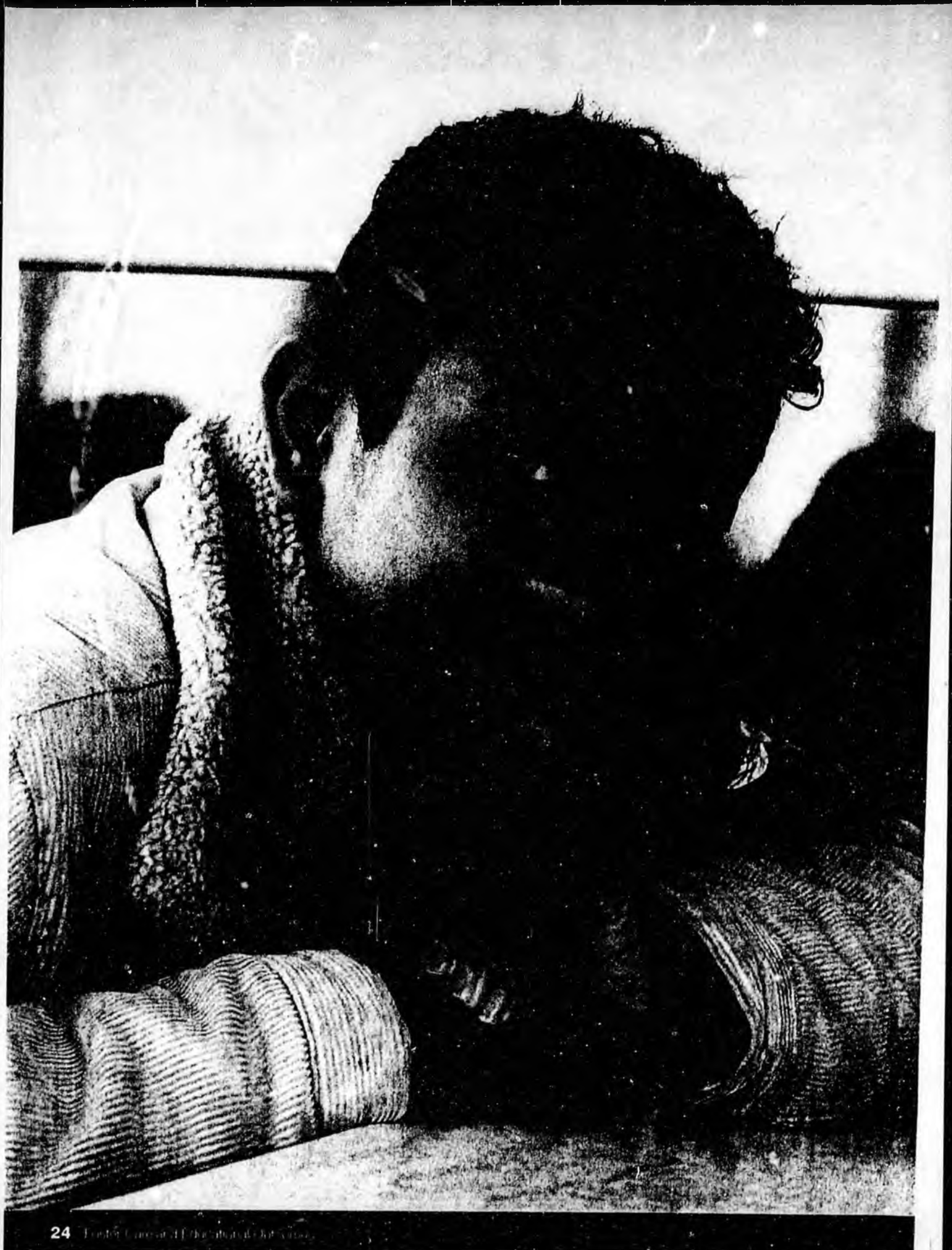
Yet this vital program is funded with only $4.9 million. This appropriation level is sufficient to provide only 20 awards over an 18-month period. Increasing appropriations will enable more districts, states, and Indian tribes to develop and evaluate programs for improving the mental health services received by youth in foster care and other needy students. Programs found to be successful should be replicated immediately in other parts of the country using local, state, and private resources.

Conclusion

The reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind Act, including McKinney-Vento, offers a timely opportunity to work with the education system to substantially improve the educational outcomes and attainment of children and youth in out-of-home care. The recommendations identified here underscore the need for school stability and continuity, as well as increased academic and mental health support services designed for youth in care. It should be noted that school stability is the glue that binds these recommendations together in a comprehensive program of support and accountability.

School stability is the glue that binds these recommendations together in a comprehensive program of support and accountability.

For too long, children and youth in foster care have languished in the shadow of the education system. With these policy improvements and increases in funding, children and youth in care will be able to fulfill their dreams of school success, independent living, and fuller participation in family and community life.



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42 U.S.C. § 11431 *et seq.*

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Annotated Bibliography: Research on Academic Outcomes of Foster Children

1. **Ayasse, R. H.** (1995). Addressing the needs of foster children: The foster youth services program. *Social Work in Education, 17*(4), 207–216.

   The article describes the Foster Youth Services programs in California and the services they provide to improve educational outcomes for foster children in the state. The article also reviews evidence of their effectiveness and finds that the programs are very effective in aiding placement of children in appropriate school programs promptly, facilitating academic progress, and helping students successfully graduate from high school.

2. **Blome, W. W.** (1997). What happens to foster kids: Educational experiences of a random sample of foster care youth and a matched group of non-foster care youth. *Child an ' Adolescent Social Work Journal, 14*(1), 41–53.

   This study uses existing longitudinal data from 1980 through 1986 to investigate the high school and post high school experiences of a group of foster care youth and a matched group of youth living with at least one parent. The study finds that foster youth drop out of high school at a much higher rate and are significantly less likely to complete a GED. The foster care high school graduates receive significantly less financial assistance for education from their parents or guardians. Foster youth report more discipline problems in school and experience more educational disruption due to changing schools. They are also significantly less likely to be in a college preparatory high school track.

3. **Burley, M., & Halpern, M.** (2001). *Educational attainment of foster youth: Achievement and graduation outcomes for children in state care.* Olympia, WA: Washington State Institute for Public Policy.

   This report summarizes existing research and presents findings from the Washington Institute for Public Policy on the educational achievement of children in foster care. The Institute finds that compared to youth not in care, youth in foster care have lower achievement test scores (15 to 20 percentile points lower) and lower rates of high school completion (59% compared to 86%). In addition, twice as many youth in foster care repeat a grade, change schools during the year, or enroll in special education programs.

4. **Cheung, S. Y., & Heath, A.** (1994). After care: The education and occupation of adults who have been in care. *Oxford Review of Education, 20*(3), 361.

   Data from the 1981 and 1991 components of the National Child Development Study are used to explore the educational qualifications and the subsequent occupations of people who had experienced care as children. The results confirm previous research that shows that people who have been in care have much lower educational qualifications than their peers who have never been in care, have higher risks of unemployment, and, if they obtain jobs, are more likely to be in lower-level jobs.

5. **Colton, M., & Heath, A.** (1994). Attainment and behaviour of children in care and at home. *Oxford Review of Education, 20*(3), 317–27.

   This paper reports findings from a longitudinal study of the educational progress and behavior of children in long-term foster care and a comparison group of children receiving social work support while remaining with their birth families. The study reinforces earlier research showing low attainment and high levels of behavior problems among children under social service supervision. Children in care with substantial behavioral problems have significantly lower educational attainment than those without major problems. In addition, children in care without behavioral problems score below the national average on standardized tests of educational attainment and show no improvement over the course of the study.

6. **Conger, D., & Rebeck, A.** (2001). *How children's foster care experiences affect their education.* New York: Vera Institute for Justice. Retrieved March 20, 2007, from http://www.vera.org/publication_pdf/147_183.pdf

   This study uses a database of school and child welfare records to analyze specific indicators of the educational achievement of 16,000 children in foster care in New York City. The study finds that foster care experiences strongly affect rates of attendance and school transfer but have little effect on reading and math test scores. Overall, foster children have very poor attendance rates compared to other students, but there are some groups of foster students who improve their attendance after entering care.

7. **Cook, R., Fleishman, E., & Grimes, V.** (1991). *A national evaluation of Title IV-E foster care independent living programs for youth: Phase 2 final report.* Rockville, MD: Westat.

This evaluation assesses the influence of the Independent Living Initiatives, Public Law 99-272, on states' development of programs, policies and services and the impact of services on outcomes for older youth discharged from foster care. The study finds that services authorized by the Independent Living Initiatives have the potential to improve outcomes for youth. In particular, skills training in specific skill areas lead to better individual outcomes and more comprehensive effects are achieved when a combination of skills is delivered within a prescribed set of five skill areas: money management, consumer skills, skill in obtaining credit, skill in the use of educational opportunities, and skill in finding and maintaining employment.

8. **Courtney, M., Piliavin, I., Grogan-Kaylor, A., & Nesmith, A.** (2001). Foster youth transitions to adulthood: A longitudinal view of youth leaving care. *Child Welfare, 80,* 685–717.

This study tracks young adults for 12–18 months after they leave foster care in Wisconsin. It reports on the youths' experiences in foster care and after exiting, including the training, educational, health services, and other forms of public assistance they receive, their incidence of delinquency, their living situations, and their finances and employment. Findings related to education include the following: the young adults had high aspirations about their educational goals—79% planned to enter college. However, 12-18 months after exiting foster care only 55% had finished high school, 37% hadn't received a diploma or GED, and only 9% had entered college.

9. **Courtney, M. E., Terao, S., & Bost, N.** (2004). *Evaluation of the adult functioning of former foster youth: Outcomes at age 19.* Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago. http://www.chapinhall.org/article_abstract.aspx?ar=1355&L2=61&L3=130

This report presents findings from a longitudinal study of youth exiting the foster care system and transitioning to independent living in Iowa, Wisconsin, and Illinois. These analyses compare youth who are still in care at age 19 to those who had exited care and to a nationally representative sample of 19-year-olds from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health on a number of indicators including those pertaining to education, health, finances, victimization, and child bearing. Foster youth have greater educational deficits than other youth. Despite high aspirations, over one-third of the youth in care did not receive a high school diploma or GED compared to fewer than 10% in the national sample. In addition, 19-year-olds in the national sample are significantly more likely to be enrolled in an education program than those in care, and of those enrolled they are much more likely to be enrolled in a 4-year college (62% compared to 18%).

10. **Courtney, M. E., Terao, S., & Bost, N.** (2004). *Evaluation of the adult functioning of former foster youth: Conditions of Illinois youth preparing to leave state care.* Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago. http://www.chapinhall.org/article_abstract.aspx?ar=1355&L2=61&L3=130

This study reports on the experiences of youth living in Iowa, Wisconsin, and Illinois who are in foster care at age 17. The study reports on the youths' physical and mental health, experiences with the juvenile justice system, and their education compared to a national sample. The study finds that almost half of the youth in care are placed in special education and they are more likely than the youth in the national sample to be retained in grade. They are also more than twice as likely to be suspended and nearly four times as likely to be expelled. The 17-year-old respondents read on average at a seventh-grade reading level.

11. **George, R. M., VanVoorhis, J., Grant, S., Casey, K., & Robinson, M** (1992). Special-education experiences of foster children: An empirical study. *Child Welfare, 71,* 419–437.

This study analyzes records from the databases of the state departments of social service and of education in Illinois to examine the characteristics and service experiences of children who are both in foster care and receiving special education services. The study finds that foster children in special education are older than the general special education population and they suffer disproportionately from emotional disturbance as their primary condition.

12. **Jackson, S.** (1994). Educating children in residential and foster care. *Oxford Review of Education, 20*(3), 267–279.

This article reviews research over nearly twenty years that consistently shows that children in residential and foster care have lower educational achievement than those living with their own families and leave school with few qualifications. The article then suggests new approaches to improve the educational achievement of these children.

13. **Kerman, B., Wildfire, J., & Barth. R.P.** (2002). Outcomes for young adults who experienced foster care. *Children and Youth Services Review, 24*(5), 319–344.

    This paper highlights the role of extending support during the critical transition through young adulthood. After a brief review of adult outcome literature, results from a follow-up study of foster children for whom reunification was not planned are described. Adoptees and children who remain in foster care into young adulthood are functioning better than those who exit at age 18 or before. Moreover, youth who remain for extended support in foster care are doing as well as those who are adopted.

14. **Kortenkamp, K., & Macomber, J.E.** (2002). *The well being of children involved with the child welfare system.* Washington, DC: Urban Institute. http://www.urban.org/publications/310413.html

    This brief presents a national overview of the well-being of children involved with the child welfare system. Findings are based on data from the 1997 and 1999 National Survey of America's Families (NSAF), a nationally representative survey of households with persons under age 65 and includes measures of economic, health, and social characteristics of more than 44,000 households. The study finds that children involved with child welfare are less likely to be engaged in school and involved in school activities and more likely to be in special education compared with children living with their parents.

15. **McDonald, T., Allen, R., Westerfelt, A., & Piliavin, I.** (1996). *Assessing the long-term effects of foster care: a research synthesis.* Washington, DC: Child Welfare League of America.

    This book reviews the findings of 29 studies published between 1960 and 1992 on the impact of childhood out-of-home care on adults' self-sufficiency, adjustment, family and social support, and personal well-being. The findings indicate that in comparison to those not receiving childhood out-of-home care, adults placed in childhood out-of-home care have poorer school performance and higher rates of school dropout.

16. **McMillen, C., Auslander, W., Elze, D., White, T., & Thompson, R.** (2003). Educational experiences and aspirations of older youth in foster care. *Child Welfare, 82*(4), 475–49.

    This study documents the school experiences of 262 youth referred for independent-living preparation from the foster care system of one midwestern U.S. county. Of the youth, 73% had been suspended at least once since the seventh grade, and 16% had been expelled. In the past year, 58% had failed a class, and 29% had physical fights with students. Yet the group reports high educational aspirations: 70% want to attend college.

17. **Pecora, P.J., Williams, J., Kessler, R.J., Downs, A.C., O'Brien, K., Hiripi, E., & Morello, S.** (2003). Assessing the effects of foster care: Early results from the Casey national alumni study. Seattle, WA: Casey Family Programs. http://www.casey.org/NR/rdonlyres/CEFBB1B6-7ED1-440D-925A-E5BAF602294D/0/casey_alumni_studies_report.pdf

    This report presents findings from a study that tracks over a thousand Casey Family Program foster care alumni and examines their educational attainment, employment, and life experiences. The study is based on data collected from case records and interviews. The study finds that the Casey alumni have high rates of high school completion but low rates of college completion compared to the population as a whole. The high school completion rate for the interviewed sample of Casey alumni (86.1%) is similar to that for the general population while the college completion rate (9%) is much lower than the rate for the general population group (24.4%).

18. **Reilly, T.** (2003). Transition from care: status and outcomes of youth who age out of foster care. *Child Welfare 82*(6), 727–746.

    This study uses administrative data from the state of Nevada's Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) to assess the experiences of youth aging out of foster care. The study assesses youths' living situations, educational attainment, employment, health status, and experience with the criminal justice system. The study finds that 50% of youth leave foster care without a high school degree, although respondents

have high educational aspirations—75% indicate they want to obtain a college degree.

19. **Shin, S.H.** (2003). Building evidence to promote educational competence of youth in foster care. *Child Welfare 82*(5), 615–632.

    This article reports the results of a study of educational competence in a sample of 152 foster youth in one Midwestern state. The study explores predictors of reading ability of youth in foster care and finds that four factors—aspiration for higher education, placement in kinship care, participation in extracurricular activities, and drug use—account for 39% of the variance in reading ability scores.

20. **Smithgall, C., Gladden, R. M., Duck-Hye Yang, Goerge, R. M.** (2005) *Behavior problems and education disruptions among children in out-of-home care in Chicago*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago. http://www.chapinhall.org/article_abstract.aspx?ar=1415&L2=64&L3=116

    This report presents findings from a study that compares the educational experiences of students in the Chicago Public Schools that are in foster care and are classified with ED (emotional disturbance) with those in care with other special education classifications and with students not in foster care classified with ED. The study methods include analyses of administrative data and interviews with case workers, special education staff, foster parents, probation officers, and mental health professionals. The study finds that children in care receive ED classifications at higher rates than other children. In addition, a significant portion of children classified as ED continue to display serious behavioral problems at school after being classified and receiving appropriate services and are less likely to graduate than students with other classifications or no classifications (16% compared to 26% and 33%).

21. **Cheryl Smithgall, Robert Matthew Gladden, Robert M. Goerge, Courtney, M.E.** (2004). Educational experiences of children in out-of-home care. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago. http://www.chapinhall.org/article_abstract.aspx?ar=1372Have

    The report presents findings from a study assessing the educational experiences of youth in foster care in Illinois. Data from Chapin Hall's Integrated Database on Child and Family Services in Illinois in addition to qualitative interviews with caseworkers, foster parents, and school staff are used to provide information on students' educational experiences. Students in care are found to have lower achievement test scores than other students—almost 50% of third to eighth grade students in out-of-home care score in the bottom quartile on the ITBS reading section. Students in care are also more likely to be retained (they are 1.8 times more likely to be old for grade) or drop out of school (15% are dropping out between ages 13 and 16).

22. **Stein, M.** (1994). Leaving care: Education and career trajectories. *Oxford Review of Education, 29*(3), 349–360.

    The paper explores the career trajectories of young people age 16–19 years who were under social service supervision using data from three "leaving care" research studies carried out at the University of Leeds in Great Britain. The analyses assess the youth in four substantive areas: their educational attainment, further education, employment and training routes, and some of the influences upon their career trajectories. The majority of youth surveyed in all three surveys are found to have no educational qualifications at the time they leave care.

23. **Vandivere, S., Chalk, R. & Anderson Moore, K.** (2003). *Children in Foster Homes: How Are They Faring?* Washington, DC: Child Trends.

    This research brief presents findings on indicators of foster children's well being. Data are taken from Child Trends' analyses of two nationally representative surveys—the National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being and the National Survey of America's Families. The survey asks foster children about their engagement and participation in school. About three quarters report getting along with teachers, listening and paying attention in school and getting homework done. However, a smaller proportion of foster children than other children report getting along with other students and enjoying being in school.

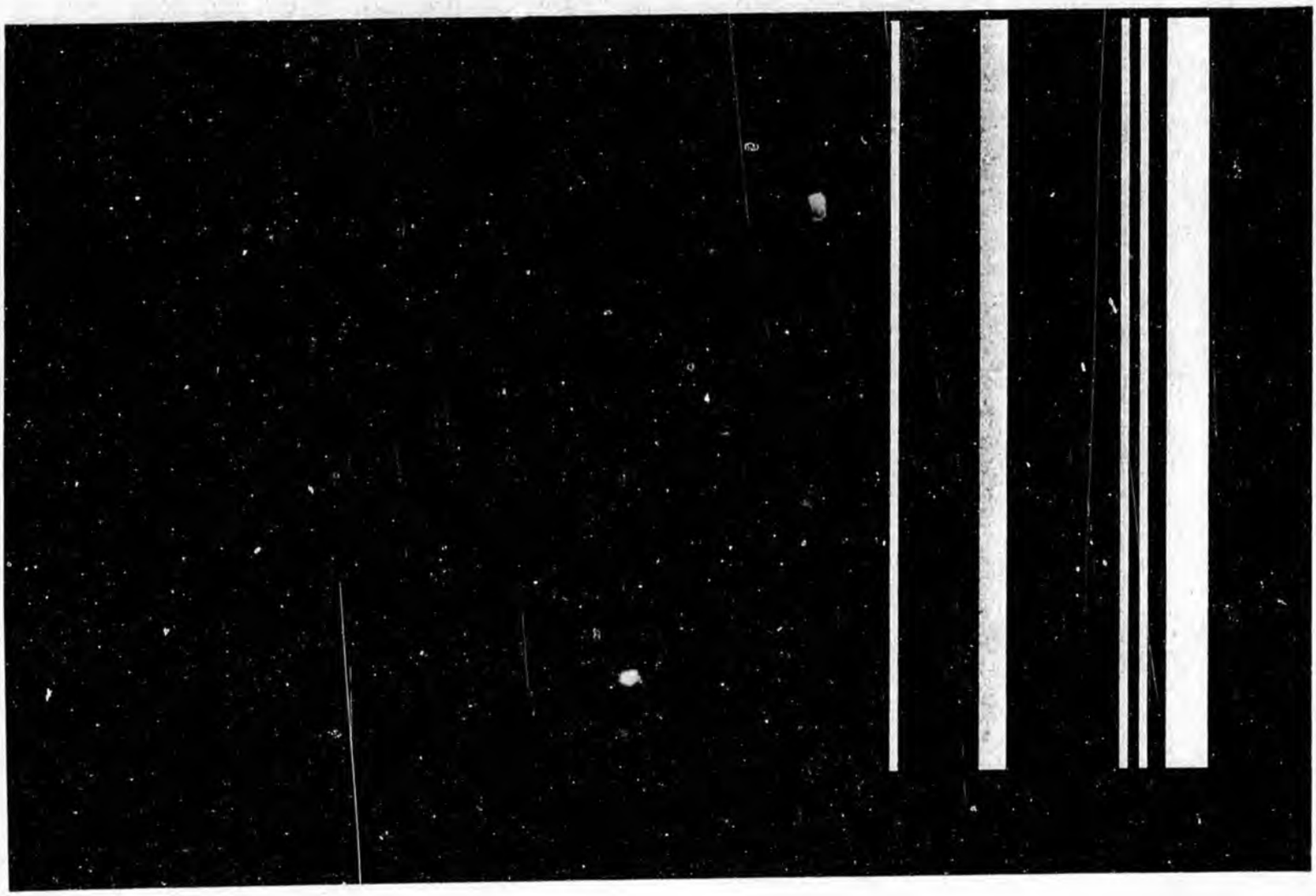
24. **Yu, E., Day, P., & Williams, M.** (2002). *Improving educational outcomes for youth in care: A national collaboration.* Washington, D.C.: Child Welfare League of America.

    The Child Welfare League of America and the National Council for Juvenile and Family Court Judges convened a symposium in 2002 to initiate a dialogue

among the child welfare, judicial, and education fields and to build consensus about improving the educational outcomes for youth in care. This report summarizes the findings of this symposium.

25. **Zima, B. T., Bussing, R., Freeman, S., Yang, X., Belin, T. R., & Forness, S. R.** (2000). Behavior problems, academic skill delays and school failure among school-aged children in foster care: Their relationship to placement characteristics. *Journal of Child and Family Studies, 9*(1), 87–103.

    The study describes the level of behavior problems, academic skill delays, and school failure among school-aged children in foster care. It also examines how behavior problems are associated with academic problems, and explores how these outcomes are related to children's placement characteristics. Foster parent and child home interviews, as well as teacher telephone interviews, are conducted from a randomly selected sample of 302 children age 6 through 12 years living in out-of-home placement. Interviews included standardized screening measures. Results show that 27% of the children score in the clinical range for a behavior problem, and 34% are rated as having at least one behavior problem in the classroom. Twenty-three percent of the children have severe delays in reading or math, 13% repeat a grade, and 14% have a history of school suspension and/or expulsion. Behavior problems reported by foster parents are related to child suspension and/or expulsion from school, but are not associated with severe academic delays or grade retention.



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fostering families, fostering change

303-3180-07

Alaska's children and their families deserve caseworkers that have been given the tools and training necessary to provide exemplary services. These improvements are expected to positively impact annual employee turnover rates, the numbers of positions available to provide direct services, and worker effectiveness.

In addition, the OCS intends to offer all OCS staff continued education opportunities. Any Internet search or walk through a local bookstore will lead the researcher to a sea of findings related to the importance of staff training. Simply put, training is critical in helping staff develop skills and knowledge; perform their job effectively and efficiently; perform their job safely; feel confident and professional; and feel valued and motivated. OCS recognizes that while education for new front-line workers is the priority, continued education for front line and all other OCS workers is extremely important as well.

Front Line Social Workers

Implement Front-line Worker Study Recommendations — Phase 2: $860.9 Total *$260.9 Federal, $600.0 GF/Match*
In FY 2008, the OCS was given six additional case workers in response to a Workload Study contracted with Hornby Zeller Associates. The study was conducted in response to legislative concerns and Citizen's Review Panel findings. The primary purpose of the study was to determine whether or not front-line caseworkers have sufficient time to meet the basic requirements of their jobs — protecting children and serving families.

The outcome of this six-month study was based on the time needed to handle a case appropriately, the time available for case-specific work, and caseload per worker. The results indicated a need for 17 additional workers.

The OCS is now requesting funding for an additional seven front-line positions and three administrative staff workers. Support positions are necessary to help alleviate some of the administrative duties that fall on line workers. The workload study revealed that line workers spend an average of 12.4 percent of their time on administrative tasks. OCS has increased its front-line staff by 63 positions over the last four fiscal years with no additional administrative staff hires.

Increased Lease Costs – Anchorage: $583.3 Total $143.3 Federal, $440.0 General Fund
This increment provides the additional funding for adequate office space for staff in Anchorage. Staff are currently housed in three different buildings.

Transfer out I/A Receipts to Infant Learning Program: ($425.0 Interagency Receipt)
Excess Interagency Receipt authorization is being transferred to the Infant Learning Program.

Family Preservation

Discontinue Private Proshare Refinancing: $322.4 General Funds
This increment replaces federal funding with general funds, due to the discontinuation of the Private ProShare Medicaid program by the federal Medicaid agency.

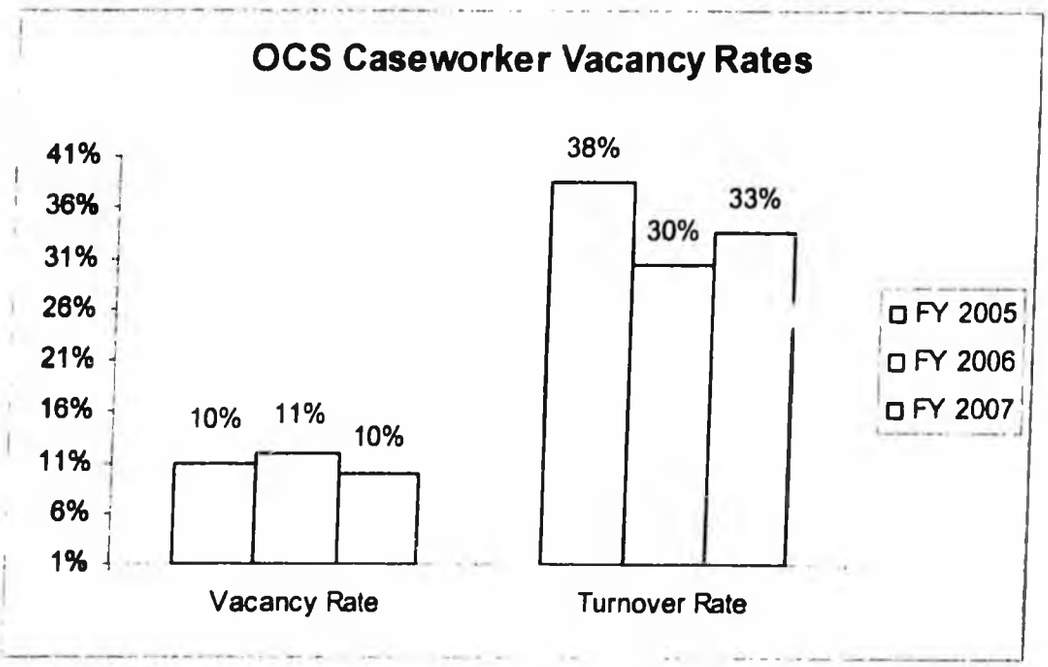
Recruitment and Retention

Child protective services are an emotionally demanding vocation. Across the nation, compassion, fatigue and vicarious trauma lead to high turnover and vacancy rates among caseworkers.

- 50 percent of OCS front-line caseworkers have been employed with the agency for less than two years, and
- 20 percent have less than one year of experience.

The OCS has been experiencing consistently similar vacancy and turnover rates since 2000. It has been an ongoing challenge to maintain full staffing levels, train staff to proficient levels of competency and institutionalize the agency's core mission and standard practice model.

The ending turnover rate for FY07 was 33 percent. The vacancy rate at the end of FY07 was 9.5 percent.



Funds requested in FY 2009, and discussed in the Explanation of FY2008 Budget Changes section previously, will allow OCS to expand new caseworker training by two weeks to offer and provide staff the full spectrum of training recommended by national experts, UAA professionals, Tribal partners, and OCS management and staff.

OCS is working toward solutions to address retention and recruitment issues and has formed a workgroup that includes a representative from the UAA Family and Youth Services Training Academy and is receiving technical assistance from the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Work has begun on establishing a realistic job profile DVD to be provided to each candidate upon application, prior to an interview. The applicant is asked to sign a simple attestation form that 1) they've watched the video, and 2) they still want to be interviewed and considered for the opening. States using this technique are seeing an increase of new employees that truly have the competencies and the heart to do child protective services work, and a decrease of early resignations dismissals.

The OCS also holds hope for several of the short- and long-term tools for recruitment and retention that were presented in October by Commissioner Karleen K. Jackson to the Executive Branch Working Group assigned to Administrative Order 237.

Other recruitment and retention challenges rotate around the question that initiated the workload study also discussed in the Explanation of FY2008 Budget Changes above: Does the Office of Children's Services have an adequate number of social workers to keep Alaska's children safe, and do some geographical areas have excess staff that could be diverted to geographical areas that need additional staff?

The continuing effort to completely implement the Hornby Zeller Associates Inc. time study remains a challenge. The study found that OCS needed 17 more positions to meet the demands of its workload and recommended regular updates to caseload distribution. Subsequent use of the workload study data set indicates that the data are confounded by a large number of cases that are not being worked and are awaiting closure. OCS is making a concerted effort to close all cases that qualify for closure, and will continue using the workload study data until it is confident that the number of caseworkers needed is as accurate as possible.

OCS has explored the option of relocating positions to Anchorage, an area of high need. A review of existing positions (PCNS) by the regional case managers indicated that the study had misidentified some positions as front-line caseworker positions that were actually supportive positions. Consequently, there is only minimal and transitory excess capacity in any field office and no significant gains would occur by transferring positions to Anchorage.

Foster Care Reimbursement Rates Have Not Been Increased In Nine Years

The Foster Care Base Rate component reimburses providers for expenditures associated with caring for children placed in their homes. The expenditures include food, clothing, daily supervision, personal items, school supplies, games and recreational activities, allowance, usual transportation costs, and other items relevant to raising a child.

There has been one family foster care rate increase in the last 16 years and that was nine years ago. Rates paid to the people of Alaska willing to bring into their homes children who have had to be removed from their own homes, and to provide care for them, are not adequate to cover the costs to these families, making it even more difficult to recruit foster parents.

As the costs of raising children have increased, front-line workers must use other means to adequately reimburse care providers forcing expenditure increases in other areas of the budget, in particular Foster Care Special Needs.

LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH REPORT

JANUARY 23, 2008

REPORT NUMBER 08.102

FRONT LINE SOCIAL WORKERS WITH THE OFFICE OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

PREPARED FOR REPRESENTATIVE LES GARA

BY ROGER WITHINGTON, LEGISLATIVE ANALYST

You asked for information regarding the front line social worker component of the Office of Children's Services. Specifically, you asked five questions which are as follows.

1) For the Office of Children's Services (OCS), what is the current total number of filled and vacant front line social worker positions?

2) In the past year, what is the net increase, or decrease, in the number of filled front line social worker positions?

3) How many administrative support staff have been added in each of the last two years?

4) How many front line social worker and administrative support positions have been created and filled within the OCS as a result of the 2006 Hornby Zeller audit recommendation?

5) What was the turnover rate for front line social workers and the OCS as a whole for the past year?

Table 1, provides the total number of filled and vacant front line social worker positions for each of the four administrative regions of the OCS. These figures represent the number of caseload carrying workers as of January 14, 2008.

907-465-3991
907-465-3908 (fax)

Alaska Legislature
Legislative Research Services
w3.legis.state.ak.us/laa/research/research.php

State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801

Table 1: Caseload Carrying Frontline Staff Positions as of January 17, 2008								
Location and Position Status	**Children's Services Specialists I**	**Children's Services Specialists II**	**Children's Services Specialists III**	**Social Worker I**	**Social Worker II**	**Social Worker IIII**	**Social Worker IV**	**Total**
Anchorage Authorized	**16**	**39**	**1**	**1**	**21**	**3**	**15**	**96**
Vacant	2	6	0	0	4	0	1	13
Filled	14	33	1	1	17	3	14	83
Northern Authorized	**10**	**10**	**0**	**1**	**14**	**1**	**10**	**46**
Vacant	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	2
Filled	10	9	0	1	14	0	10	44
Southcentral Authorized	**13**	**28**	**0**	**4**	**23**	**0**	**14**	**82**
Vacant	1	2	0	0	0	0	1	4
Filled	12	26	0	4	23	0	13	78
Southeast Authorized	**4**	**15**	**0**	**1**	**5**	**0**	**6**	**31**
Vacant	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Filled	4	15	0	1	5	0	6	31
Statewide Authorized	**43**	**92**	**1**	**7**	**63**	**4**	**45**	**255**
Vacant	3	9	0	0	4	1	2	19
Filled	40	83	1	7	59	3	43	236
Notes:	Social Worker IV positions are supervisory.							
Sources:	Michael D. Lesmann, Community Relations Manager, Office of Children's Services, 907-465-3548.							

Figures provided in Table 1 show that 7 percent of the front line social worker positions statewide were vacant as of January 14. For individual regions, 14 percent were vacant in the Anchorage region, 4 percent were vacant in the Northern region, and 5 percent were vacant in the Southcentral region, while the Southeast region was fully staffed.

According to Michael Lesmann, Community Relations Manager for the Office of Children's Services, during calendar year 2007, the OCS experienced a net increase of eleven front line social workers. On January 1, 2007, there were 226 case worker positions filled, while on January 1, 2008, the number of filled positions had increased to 237.[1] Mr. Lesmann also notes that no new regional administrative support positions have been authorized for the Office of Children's Services front line social worker component in the past five years.[2]

In response to our questions regarding the statewide workload study prepared in 2006 by Hornby Zelier Associates, which recommended that the OCS add additional staff, Mr. Lesmann notes that there have been no administrative positions filled in response to the Hornby Zeller workload

[1] Michael D. Lesmann, Community Relations Manager, Office of Children's Services, 907-465-3548

[2] In addition to the Social Worker and Children's Services Specialist job classes, the Front Line Social Worker component of the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services' budget includes job classes such as Administrative Clerk, Eligibility Technician, Nurse, and Research Analyst.

study.[3] He further notes, however, that six new positions have been authorized in the front line social worker component in response to the workload study; one case worker, four licensing specialists, and one position with job duties yet to be determined by the region. Two of the five established positions have been filled, one position is currently in the interview process, and two positions are vacant.

According to Mr. Lesmann,

> 31 positions were authorized in 2006, but not in response to the workload study that was released in May of 2006. If these 31 positions and the six positions related to the workload study are considered, 48 hires have been made.

Mr. Lesmann reports that the turnover rate for front line social workers in FY 2007 was 33 percent. He also notes that the OCS did not track total worker turnover prior to July 1, 2007. To date, however, the FY 2008 fiscal year turnover rate for all OCS employees is 21 percent. This figure does not include Division of Finance and Management Services staff that support the OCS.

I hope you find this information to be useful. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have questions or need additional information.

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[3] One of the recommendations from the Hornby Zeller *Statewide Workload Study*, is for the OCS to "make an effort to attain additional positions at whatever speed they can be absorbed from both a political and an agency standpoint." *Statewide Workload Study*, produced in May 2006 by Hornby Zeller Associates, Inc., can be viewed at *http://hss.state.ak.us/ocs/Publications/default.htm*

Consumer Price Index - All Urban Consumers

Series Id: CUURA427SA0,CUUSA427SA0
Not Seasonally Adjusted
Area: Anchorage, AK
Item: All items
Base Period: 1982-84=100

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual	HALF1	HALF2
1999													148.4	148.6	148.3
2000													150.9	150.0	151.9
2001													155.2	154.4	156.0
2002													158.2	157.5	159.0
2003													162.5	161.1	163.9
2004													166.7	165.6	167.8
2005													171.8	169.6	174.1
2006													177.3	176.7	177.9
2007													181.237	179.394	183.080

12 Months Percent Change

Series Id: CUURA427SA0,CUUSA427SA0
Not Seasonally Adjusted
Area: Anchorage, AK
Item: All items
Base Period: 1982-84=100

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual	HALF1	HALF2
1999													1.0	1.3	0.9
2000													1.7	0.9	2.4
2001													2.8	2.9	2.7
2002													1.9	2.0	1.9
2003													2.7	2.3	3.1

2004													2.6	2.8	2.4
2005													3.1	2.4	3.8
2006													3.2	4.2	2.2
2007													2.2	1.5	2.9

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
Postal Square Building
2 Massachusetts Ave., NE
Washington, DC 20212-0001

Phone: (202) 691-5200
Do you have a **Data question**?
Do you have a **Technical (web) question**?
Do you have **Other comments**?

Meagan Foster

From: Tamara Keech [TKeech@nwresource.org]
Sent: Monday, October 22, 2007 9:11 AM
To: Meagan Foster
Subject: FW: Foster Care Rates

Here is a letter from one of our foster parents.

From: Tammy Keech [mailto:keechtammy@hotmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, October 17, 2007 3:32 PM
To: Tamara Keech
Subject: FW: Foster Care Rates

Tamara L. Keech
Never take things for granted

Date: Wed, 17 Oct 2007 14:50:45 -0700
From: saverlifes@yahoo.com
Subject: Foster Care Rates
To: keechtammy@hotmail.com

Sir,

I am writing in regards to the foster care rates. I am a foster parent and have been for almost five years. I have to say that the foster care payment for infants is reasonable. Yet as the children get older their issues increase and require more time, energy and money. Yet that is when the stipend goes down. Children would often benefit from being in a sport or gymnastics of some kind to work out, yet it is often not done because of money issues. As is, the rate takes care of food, housing (laundry, heating the house, etc), some toys and some clothes. Yet I don't think it has been considered that most people in foster care need bigger homes, bigger vehicles and insurance to cover the bigger vehicle, and most importantly child care so that the foster parents can go out for an evening. It costs quite a bit for someone to care for a bigger family especially kids with special needs. A babysitter would cost at least two or three days worth of the current rate, just for one evening. I will be so bold as to say that a lot of foster parents get burned out after just a few years because they do not get adequate time to re-energize away from the children.

Thank you for considering what I have said. I do appreciate the fact that the issue is being addressed. We as foster parents aren't doing this for the money, but we would like to be given rates that would help us deal with the costs of having larger families.

Thank you again for your time and consideration,
Sara C.
foster parent

Meagan Foster

From: Tamara Keech [TKeech@nwresource.org]
Sent: Monday, October 22, 2007 9:11 AM
To: Meagan Foster
Subject: FW: Foster Care Rates

Another letter...

From: Tammy Keech [mailto:keechtammy@hotmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, October 17, 2007 3:33 PM
To: Tamara Keech
Subject: FW: Foster Care Rates

Tamara L. Keech
Never take things for granted

Date: Wed, 17 Oct 2007 13:49:39 -0800
From: ldsblueyes@gmail.com
To: keechtammy@hotmail.com
Subject: Foster Care Rates

Thanks for including me.

I have two toddlers, one with special needs: between the WIC and medicaid, the stipend is enough. But, we are also blessed to have family and friends who watch our boys for free (or really cheap). I could see other families struggling with affording good quality babysitters. I define "good quality" as someone who has a drivers license, capable of handling challenging situations responsibly and lovingly; and capable of loving the children (so they can be more understanding and attentive of their needs). Now, these qualities aren't terribly hard to find, BUT affording a wage that competes with their desire to spend Friday or Saturday night with their friends can be pricey... not to mention the last minute pleas for a night out! I was able to find an amazing sitter that was willing to committ to almost every Friday night for three hours, at $10/hour. Now, when you plan on going out to spend money... that can add up to a lot. So, I think the stipend "Matrix" should reconsider upping the approx $29/month for sitters.

Hope that helps!
Becki

--
"My life is like my shoes - to be worn out in services" Spencer W. Kimball

Carlene Hockema

PO Box 232586, Anchorage, AK 99523-2586
Phone: 868-1208 Email: carlene_hockema@yahoo.com

716 W. 4th Avenue Ste 310
Anchorage, AK 99501-2133
October 18, 2007

Dear Representative Gara,

I am a new foster parent and am concerned about the current foster care rates. I have taken in an infant and receive the monthly rate of $664.95.

My main concern comes primarily from the awakening I received when trying to find adequate daycare for my foster child. I am one of the lucky ones; I was able to find a wonderful childcare provider whose monthly rate has me paying roughly $75.00out of the monthly rate I receive for caring for the child to make up the difference between what the care provider charges and what the Office of Children's Services (OCS) pays for daycare each month.

OCS pays $550 per month and the rates for a few of the daycares were $700 and $925 per month. As I said, I am one of the lucky ones because the care provider I was able to find is a wonderful person and I am comfortable leaving my foster child with her. I would have been less comfortable leaving him with one of the other providers; higher rates do not indicate better care.

My household expenses in setting up for taking in a child far exceeded the first month's rate. I have also incurred an increase in my utilities and automobile expenses. While my child is receiving the majority of his formula through WIC the food percentage allowed on the foster care rates offsets some of these expenses. I budget for the appropriate developmental toys and books which are not inexpensive, even if they are second hand. I assure he receives all of available and appropriate early interventions he needs in order to overcome notable deficits.

Many, if not all, of the children in foster care have multiple special needs that require foster parents to provide more than basic care and supplies. If you want quality people to care for some of the older children in the system I believe it is necessary to increase the rates to take care of the personal and developmental needs of all the children.

Thank you,

Carlene L. Hockema

Meagan Foster

From: Tamara Keech [TKeech@nwresource.org]
Sent: Wednesday, October 24, 2007 7:58 AM
To: Meagan Foster
Subject: FW: Bonnie

Megan here is some thoughts from another foster parent.

From: Tammy Keech [mailto:keechtammy@hotmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, October 23, 2007 8:32 PM
To: Tamara Keech
Subject: FW: Bonnie

Tamara L. Keech
Never take things for granted

Date: Wed, 17 Oct 2007 15:39:57 -0800
From: Starblue@gci.net
Subject: RE: Bonnie
To: keechtammy@hotmail.com

Hey Tammy I am not sure if I qualify for writing something since my pay is so different from regular pay. I know getting the regular pay that it does not cover caring for a baby at all!!! Even with the emergency pay that I receive formula and diapers add up fast! And my kids usually come in a diaper and I have to buy clothes right away to put on them. Plus now gas if so high running kids back and forth to school adds up real fast. Not to mention visits two to three times a week. I can put 40 miles plus on for each visit when I take them come home and go back to get them again. And I do not have them long enough most of the time to put the babies on WIC to help get formula, so I go buy what they need. The one I have right now is on the expensive one at $26.98 a can. The doctor will not authorize WIC for him as he did not put him on that formula, but by the time I find the doctor who will he will be gone.

Anyway that is my 2 cents about the pay. I have been fostering here in Alaska since 1988 and only seen a small, I mean very small increase in all these years. It is time if they want to even have foster parents to raise the pay to cover the care. Right now to care for a baby 24 hours foster parents get $.89 an hour. And with babies you are up lots during the night. And then to buy formula at $15.00 a can and diapers, clothes and gas it is not any pay at all. Yes we do this as volunteers but now day's people can not afford to take care of their own family and take on others without help.

I would love to see some of the State people or Governor try to care for a child on $19.07 or $21.45 a day.

Bonnie Large

Starblue@gci.net

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

REPRESENTATIVE LES GARA

MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 17, 2008

TO: Rep. Peggy Wilson, Chair
House Health, Education, and Social Services Committee

FROM: Rep. Les Gara

RE: Testifiers on HB 358

We anticipate the following people testifying on HB 358.

- Theresa Tanoury (By request) Teleconference
- Amanda Metivier (By request) Teleconference
- Barry Levit Foster Care Parent, Homer Legislative Information Office
- Representative from Office of Children's Services, Teleconference
- Possible foster care youths, alumni, and parents

January-May: State Capitol • Juneau, AK 99801-1182 • (907) 465-2647 • Fax (907) 465-3518
June-December: 716 W. 4th Avenue • Anchorage, AK 99501• (907) 269-0106• Fax (907) 269-0109
Representative_Les_Gara@legis.state.ak.us

Meagan Foster

From: Tamara Keech [TKeech@nwresource.org]
Sent: Monday, October 22, 2007 9:11 AM
To: Meagan Foster
Subject: FW: Foster Care Rates

Here is a letter from one of our foster parents.

From: Tammy Keech [mailto:keechtammy@hotmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, October 17, 2007 3:32 PM
To: Tamara Keech
Subject: FW: Foster Care Rates

Tamara L. Keech
Never take things for granted

Date: Wed, 17 Oct 2007 14:50:45 -0700
From: saverlifes@yahoo.com
Subject: Foster Care Rates
To: keechtammy@hotmail.com

Sir,

I am writing in regards to the foster care rates. I am a foster parent and have been for almost five years. I have to say that the foster care payment for infants is reasonable. Yet as the children get older their issues increase and require more time, energy and money. Yet that is when the stipend goes down. Children would often benefit from being in a sport or gymnastics of some kind to work out, yet it is often not done because of money issues. As is, the rate takes care of food, housing (laundry, heating the house, etc), some toys and some clothes. Yet I don't think it has been considered that most people in foster care need bigger homes, bigger vehicles and insurance to cover the bigger vehicle, and most importantly child care so that the foster parents can go out for an evening. It costs quite a bit for someone to care for a bigger family especially kids with special needs. A babysitter would cost at least two or three days worth of the current rate, just for one evening. I will be so bold as to say that a lot of foster parents get burned out after just a few years because they do not get adequate time to re-energize away from the children.

Thank you for considering what I have said. I do appreciate the fact that the issue is being addressed. We as foster parents aren't doing this for the money, but we would like to be given rates that would help us deal with the costs of having larger families.

Thank you again for your time and consideration,
Sara C.
foster parent

HB

384

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Interim:
600 East Railroad Avenue
Wasilla, Alaska 99654
Phone (907) 373-1842
Fax: (907) 373-4729

Session:
State Capitol Building
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182
Phone: (907) 465-2186
Fax: (907) 465-3818

REPRESENTATIVE WES KELLER
DISTRICT 14
SPONSOR STATEMENT
HB 384

"An Act requiring the Department of Education and Early Development to establish an electronic education records system and standards and requiring school districts to establish and maintain electronic education records systems; requiring learning plans for students; establishing the Merit Scholarship Task Force; and providing for an effective date."

HB 384 puts the discussion of education outcomes on the table by bringing Alaska's education records into the 21st Century. The bill builds a structure for Electronic Education Records (EERs) for all students regardless of where they attend school in the state. More importantly, it expands student records to allow appropriately accessible information that is needed to do prescriptive teaching specific to the needs and gifts of each individual child. The objective of HB 384 is to incentivize an EER system that overcomes the limitations of distance and time to give an unprecedented advantage to Alaska's students, teachers, parents, and local school community.

HB 384 will provide the tools needed to create a customized education plan for each of our students whether that plan is pointed toward college or vocational postsecondary goals. It ensures that the educational goals are set at the family and local school district level to pre-empt federal imposition of external standards. The parent/student "ownership" of EER's (including customized learning plans) is solidly established in the bill. Districts will manage the EER's using technical standards established by the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development.

HB 384 also takes the first step toward implementing a purely merit-based scholarship program as an integral part of K-12. The intent of the scholarship program would be to provide an incentive for students aiming at college or vocational training who take four years each of preparatory courses, have a high grade point average, and a favorable post secondary entrance examination score. The bill simply establishes a task force to make recommendations regarding the amount of the scholarship and the 'height of the bar' based on review of successful models in other states.

Passage of HB 384 would be a statement that, "all students are special" and that "Alaska's K-12 students are worthy of high expectations and will respond well to clear goals and incentives.

E-Mail: Representative_Wes_Keller@legis.state.ak.us
Call Juneau Toll free: (800) 468-2186
Website: www.akrepublicans.org/keller/

EDUCATION RECORDS Q & A

The following document is intended to be a guide. This document is not all-inclusive or exhaustive. For further details, consult the appropriate regulations or policies.

Laws, Regulations, Statutes and Policies Regarding Education Records

1. What are education records?

- Education records are files, documents, and materials containing information directly related to a student that are maintained by an educational agency or institution or by a person acting for the agency/institution, including part-time and contractual staff.

2. What special provisions govern education records?

- Laws and regulations that dictate access to and disclosure of education records include *The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), General Education Provisions Act (GEPA),* and state policies.

3. What is FERPA?

- The *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974* is federal legislation that guarantees access to education records by parents and students while preventing the disclosure of records without consent. FERPA is also known as the Buckley Amendment, in honor of its original author.

4. Where are school records referenced in IDEA?

- Confidentiality of information is addressed in Sections 300.560 through 300.577 of 34 CFR 300.

5. How does the *Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)* impact education records?

- HIPAA guidelines govern medical records maintained by medical agencies and personnel. Once health records become a part of the education record maintained by the school district--for example, health records used for special education evaluation and programming purposes—the school district must follow IDEA and FERPA requirements for those records, not HIPAA. (This explanation is in the preamble to the regulations at page 82483 of the Federal Register for December 28, 2000, Volume 65, Number 250.)

Maintenance, Inspection, and Release of Education Records

6. What are the standards for maintenance, inspection, and release of education records?

- An agency official will assume responsibility for ensuring confidentiality of education records.
- All persons collecting or using education records must be trained on policies regarding confidentiality of records.
- Records will be maintained in a locked storage facility.
- Each agency will maintain a current listing of the names and positions of all employees who have access to special education records. This list will be available for public inspection.
- A log will be kept in each record indicating the names of the people accessing the record, the date the record was used, and the purpose for reviewing the record. This log must be kept for as long as the education record is kept.
- Under IDEA, agencies must provide parents with a list of the types and locations of education records, when requested.
- Systems must allow parents to inspect education records and, under certain circumstances, to receive copies of records. (See answers to questions #10 through #14 re: parents' rights to review and receive copies of records.)
- Requests from parents to review records will be complied within a reasonable amount of time, in no case to exceed 45 days.
- Parents must be allowed to identify records that might be inaccurate and to correct those records. The correction or attempt to correct records must be maintained for as long as the records are maintained.
- A school or agency may not distribute personally identifiable information without parental notice and/or consent, except under certain limited circumstances. (See question #9 for a listing of limited circumstances.)

7. How long must a school maintain or keep education records?

- IDEA says that a permanent record of a student's name, address, phone number, grades, attendance record, classes attended, grade level completed, and year completed may be maintained without time limitations.

- Generally, FERPA does not address retention and destruction of education records. Other federal laws, state laws, and professional standards guide retention and destruction of education records.

- A school or agency may not destroy an education record if there is an outstanding request by a parent to inspect and review the record.

- According to GEPA, schools and agencies that receive federal funds must keep records needed for monitoring program compliance and auditing expenditures. Records should be kept for three years after completing the funded activity.

- IEPs and evaluation reports are examples of documents that could be subject to GEPA record retention requirements.

- The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) indicates that state agencies and school districts must retain:
  1. records to show compliance with IDEA requirements;
  2. records to show how IDEA funds are used; and
  3. other records to facilitate an effective audit.

8 What does personally identifiable information mean?

- Personally identifiable information contained in education records includes, but is not limited to:
  1. the name of the student and the student's parent or other family members;
  2. the address of the student;
  3. a personal identifier, such as social security number or student number; or
  4. a list of personal characteristics or other information that would make it easy to identify the student.

9. What are the requirements for releasing records?

- A public agency will obtain written parental consent before releasing personally identifiable information from education records.

- Written consent must be signed and dated by the parents and must include:
  1. a list of the records to be disclosed;
  2. the purpose of disclosure; and
  3. identification of the parties receiving the information.

- Education records will be disclosed without written parental consent if the disclosure is made to:
  1. other school officials within the agency who have a legitimate educational interest;
  2. officials of another school, school district or other educational agency in which the child plans to enroll:
     A. when the transfer of records is initiated by the parent; or

B. when the school district includes a notice in its policies and procedures that it forwards education records on request to a school district or other educational agency in which a student enrolls; or
C. after a reasonable attempt to notify the parent that the transfer of records has been made.

- When a disclosure is made under the limited circumstances listed above, the public agency will, upon request, provide a copy of the disclosed records to the parent.

- A school district may also release records without parental consent to comply with a subpoena or court order. In these circumstances, the school district should notify the parent that it intends to comply with the subpoena or court order so the parents have sufficient time to seek injunctive relief before the records are released.

Parental Rights

10. What rights do parents have to inspect and review education records?

- The parents may inspect and review any education records relating to their child that are collected, maintained or used by the participating agency providing education and related services.

- Under IDEA, parents may appoint representatives to review student records, although this is not allowed under FERPA. For students with disabilities, IDEA supersedes FERPA.

11. How can parents inspect electronic (computerized) education records that are not kept on paper?

- Parents have the right to inspect computerized records. In 1996, the FERPA definition of "record" was changed to include the term "computer media." The change was made to cover information stored by computer, including information stored on CD-ROM.

- Creating and printing hard copies of electronically stored records for parent review seem to be reasonable means of complying with this regulation.

12. What rights do parents have to request copies of education records?

- Parents have the right to request copies of records.

- If parents cannot otherwise exercise their right to inspect and review the records, then districts must provide copies of records.

- Parents are entitled to copies of the IEP.

13. Can a school district charge a parent a fee to search for, retrieve, or copy information?

- A school or agency may not charge a fee to search for or to retrieve education records.

- A school or agency may charge for copies, unless doing so prevents the parent from accessing and reviewing records, as in the case of a parent who cannot afford copies and who cannot otherwise access and review records.

- Parents are entitled to copies of the IEP at no cost.

14. What is the process that a school district follows when a parent requests to review education records?

- Verify that the person is a parent of the student and is entitled to review the records, or that the parent has signed consent for their representative to review the records.

- Verify that the documents are education records by definition. (See question #1.)

- Organize the requested records.

- Provide only information related to that student.

- Make arrangements for the parent to review the records.

- When review is not feasible, provide a copy of the requested records.

- Respond to reasonable requests for explanations of the contents of the records.

- Do not destroy records while a request for review is pending.

- Comply with the request within 45 days.

Destruction of Education Records

15. Must the school notify the parents of a student with a disability before destroying education records?

- IDEA requires parental notification when the school decides that personally identifiable information is no longer needed to provide educational services to the child.

- The parent has the option of requesting access to and/or copies of records prior to destruction.

- If the district chooses, records may be maintained indefinitely, unless the parent specifically asks that the records be destroyed.

- Upon parental request, education records will be destroyed, unless the district determines that the information could be needed to provide educational services in the future or is needed for auditing purposes.

- FERPA regulations do not require notification of parents prior to destruction of records. For students with disabilities, the IDEA regulations above supersede the FERPA regulations.

16. **What is an acceptable method of destroying education records?**

- Physical destruction of a record may be necessary so that the document no longer contains personably identifiable information.

- In some instances the district may choose to remove or otherwise obliterate all personally identifiable information while keeping the document on file.

Education Technology Policy Statement

NCSL approved unanimously in the fall of 2007 in Boston.

Senators Davis, Ellis, French, Hoffman, Stevens, and Wielechowski and Representatives Buch, Crawford, Dahlstrom, Doll, Fairclough, G rdner, Gatto, Johanson, Johnson, Kawasaki, Keller, Lynn, Meyer, Olso.., and Ramras were in attendance from Alaska.

Twenty First Century globalization, along with advances in tecinology, compel parents, educators, and policymakers to ensure that every child is equipped with the education necessary to compete in today's emerging global economy. Advances include new and exciting means for achieving these education goals.

Advances in technology expand teaching potential and efficiency that enable increased ability **to customize and monitor each child's educational experience.** These enhancements diminish the sionificance of geographic distance and makes possible access to students, records, assessments, remediation, and an unprecedented scope of information--- 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

While education is primarily and properly a state responsibility, the federal government can play an important supporting role for applying technology to: increase personalized instruction; decrease student boredom and teacher burnout; stimulate discovery, innovation, and creativity; achieve NCLB requirements related to tutorial services, supplemental services, provision of highly qualified teachers, and meeting the reporting requirements; and to provide education equity for every student, regardless of location or economic status.

The federal Enhancing Education through Technology (EETT or "E2T2") block-grant program is the primary source of federal funding for school technology. In FY-06, EETT received $275 million, down from $496 million in FY-05. The administration has asked Congress to eliminate the program and EETT funding in each of the last three budget cycles, including the current budget proposal for FY-08.

The National Conference of State Legislatures believes that this an example of a critical program necessary to ensure that every child is equipped with the creative thinking, problem solving, and analytical skills needed to compete in today's global market place. Funding for EETT should be restored and enhanced because the program represents a national state-based educational partnership that can serve as a model of innovation and excellence.

EDUCATION ISSUES

NATIONAL CONFERENCE of STATE LEGISLATURES

A Primer for Policymakers

How Education Technology Leads to Improved Student Achievement

By Heather Grinager

November 2006

Introduction

There is little doubt that information and communication technologies have changed the world in which we live. They have enabled us to communicate, learn, work and relate to one another differently. This transformed world poses new and interesting questions for legislators who are searching for strategies to positively influence student achievement and who are seeking to ensure that the educational system adequately prepares students for the 21st century and tomorrow's challenges.

As the representative body that is responsible for the states' purse strings, legislators also are demanding more rigorous evidence that education funding is increasing student achievement before they make significant additional investments. In particular, because technology is a relatively new tool in education, a high level of scrutiny often is placed on technology's effectiveness. Nevertheless, in a time when high-stakes testing and restricted resources are driving forces in the delivery of public education, it is crucial for policymakers to have a realistic understanding of the existing evidence of technology's effect in education and the role it plays in teaching and learning. This brief reviews how technology is used as a tool to support teaching and learning, and how technology affects student achievement.

Why is education technology important? The use of technology in education provides students with technology literacy, information literacy, capacity for life-long learning and other skills necessary for the 21st century workplace. Books such as *The World Is Flat* by Thomas Friedman and recent reports such as *Rising Above The Gathering Storm: Energizing and*

What Is Education Technology?

Education technology typically refers to the use of hardware, software and other digital technologies to advance learning, teaching and administration in K-12 and post-secondary education settings. The following is a partial list of the types of technologies found in educational settings.

Computers — Laptops, desktops, handheld devices, etc.
Enterprise Management Software and Classroom Administration — Allows automation of processes and more efficient delivery of services; also enables data to drive school and classroom management, among other purposes (e.g. student information systems, transportation, facilities management, human resources, professional development, grade books, accounting and procurement).
Instructional Software and Digital/Online Content — Provides engaging, interactive, adaptive instruction/curriculum that enables anytime and anywhere personalization of learning to meet an individual student's needs and pace.
Student Information Systems and Data Warehouses — Enable the collection, analysis and management of student data to inform instruction, facilitate school/state decision making, and support accountability. Also introduce increased potential for individualized learning plans.
Interactive Whiteboards and LCD Projectors — Replace chalkboards in classrooms.
Sound Enhancement — Speakers and microphones in classrooms to amplify and enhance the quality of teachers' and students' voices.
Smart Cards — Replaces lunch tickets and lunch cards.
Global Positioning Systems — Track school buses.
Televisions — Distance learning and supplemental instruction.
Telephones — Communication with parents and community.
Digital Cameras, Camera Microscopes
Internet Access

Employing America for a Brighter Economic Future, authored by the National Academies, have raised concerns that America is falling from its once prominent position as the world's leader in technology and science. Technology helps prepare students for a world where they will compete with the best and brightest individuals from every corner of the globe. In addition, some argue that today's students, surrounded by digital technology since infancy, differ fundamentally from previous generations of learners the U.S. educational system was designed to teach.[1] Further embedding technology in education at all levels uses the tools students are accustomed to using outside the classroom, further engaging students in the learning process.

How does education technology lead to improved student achievement? A growing body of evidence demonstrates that technology is an effective means for addressing educational needs, goals and requirements. Educators also have identified links between technology and intermediate goals that lead to high achievement, including improved student behavior, engagement and attendance; improved opportunities for educator professional development; increased efficiency in classroom administrative tasks; and improved communication among stakeholders, including parents, teachers, students and administrators. As with all educational interventions, results do vary, depending upon the specific technologies used, the match of technology to educational needs and goals, the effective implementation of that technology, and how achievement is defined and measured.

Legislators considering investing in education technology must understand that an investment in hardware and software alone is not enough to lead to improved student achievement. Effective implementation is as important as the technology itself, and there are certain conditions that support effective implementation. The purpose of using technology should be to meet already established educational goals, and must be accompanied by a teacher who is properly trained to integrate it into teaching and instruction, as well as strong school leadership that ensures effective deployment and implementation. Adequate technical support and the appropriate school infrastructure, including adequate access to computers and bandwidth, are also important conditions that will help ensure technology has a positive effect on student learning and achievement.

Essential Elements to Ensure Technologies Are Used to Support Real Gains in Educational Outcomes

1. Leadership around technology use that is anchored in solid educational objectives. Simply placing technologies in schools does little good. Effective technology use is always targeted at specific educational objectives.
2. Sustained and intensive professional development that takes place in the service of the core vision, not simply around technology for its own sake.
3. Adequate technology resources in the school, including hardware and technical support to ensure smooth operation.
4. Recognition that real change and lasting results take time.
5. Evaluations that enable school leaders and teachers to determine whether they are realizing their goals, and how to adjust if necessary.

Source: Testimony and Statement of Margaret Honey, vice president and director, Center for Children and Technology, before the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Subcommittee, U.S. Senate, July 25, 2001.

Digital Natives vs. Digital Immigrants

As technology continues to advance into every aspect of our lives, some have pondered the effects it has on how students learn. The phrase "Digital Natives and Digital Immigrants" has emerged to describe the difference between young people who have spent their lives in a digital world and past generations who have incrementally adjusted to the proliferation of technology in society.

The current generation of students who are proceeding through K-12 education are digital natives, and some argue that, by spending their entire lives surrounded by and using computers, videogames, digital music players, video cams, cell phones, and other tools and devices of the digital age, they are fundamentally different from those who have adapted to use of these tools over time. Digital natives are accustomed to receiving information rapidly; can parallel process and multi-task; prefer viewing graphics before text; and function best when networked.[2] Some even argue that digital natives think differently. It is as though their cognitive structures are parallel, rather than sequential.[3]

This fundamental difference brings into question whether the current U.S. education system is designed to effectively teach digital natives. Educators may need to consider adjusting both teaching methodology and content to better engage digital natives in learning. Teachers will need to learn to communicate in the language and style of their students by going faster; using more parallel methods rather than going step-by-step. Although traditional content will remain central, it will be equally as important to present content that addresses technology issues, including understanding software, hardware, robotics, nanotechnology, and their ethics, politics, sociology and languages.[4]

Technology as a Tool for Learning and Teaching

When they are well implemented, instructional courseware, digital content and other electronic learning resources can help meet intermediary goals that can lead to improved student achievement, making technology an essential tool in teaching and learning in the 21st century. Quality electronic learning resources—in addition to being learner appropriate, aligned to state and local standards, and built around effective pedagogy and instructional design—can provide many educational benefits, including:

- Engaging students through multi-media, interactive content;
- Strengthening understanding and thinking skills through exploration, collaboration and creation;
- Adapting to support differentiated or personalized learning for students who have a specific learning style, pace or needs;
- Keeping knowledge current and information accurate;
- Enhancing accessibility for physical or learning disabled students through assistive technologies and presentation of content in alternative modalities; and
- Integrating testing and classroom management tools, thus allowing real-time tracking of student performance to inform instruction and provide accountability.

Education Technology and the Digital Divide

Education technology initiatives help bridge the digital divide. Embedding technology in education settings can help promote greater equity among students of different racial and socioeconomic backgrounds by increasing access to information and information technology for all groups. A report from the U.S. Department of Commerce found that minority and low-income students are much more likely to rely on their schools to provide access to computers and the Internet, and noted the "substantial equalizing effect of schools on both computer and Internet use as compared to use at home."[5]

Technology as a Tool for Learning

Numerous examples are available to illustrate how technology meets these goals. The late Dr. Jan Hawkins, former director of the Center for Children and Technology, suggests that technology is a powerful tool that gives teachers, students and others new ways to address problems such as shortages of materials, time and professional development.[6] For instance, technology brings rich and diverse materials into the classroom. Hundreds of libraries and museums have recorded parts of their collections in digital form and distribute these sources through the Internet and as software. Through a project called CoVis, students learn about science, using some of the same research tools and datasets used by scientists in the field. Using sophisticated software, the students collect and examine data on the weather, temperature, barometric pressure and atmospheric chemistry and are able to display and view the information in color-coded maps and graphs that help them understand and allow them to learn in a deeper way.

Technology also has the ability to change the dynamics of time and space in schools. By helping students work more independently, technology gives teachers more time to work one-on-one or with small groups of students. Assessment technologies also help teachers more efficiently identify students' strengths and weaknesses to better target instruction. With digital record keeping, phones in the classroom, and access to local networks to communicate with parents, administrators and colleagues, teachers can spend more time teaching and less on paperwork. In addition, students can extend their learning if they can connect from home to their school's network and to other courses and resources.[7]

Technology has allowed students and parents increased opportunities for individualizing, customizing and providing access to education through virtual or distance learning. Students who have struggled in traditional classrooms often find success in a virtual setting where the teacher and student communicate one-on-one through computer use and the student can proceed at his or her own pace. It also offers access to highly qualified teachers in hard-to-staff subjects or hard-to-staff urban and rural schools, giving all students the opportunity to take a rigorous curriculum, regardless of their school's ability to recruit and retain teachers. Thus, the traditional model of offering instruction only in dedicated, highly regulated facilities according to standard calendars and schedules is outdated, since "any time, any place, any path, any pace" learning that modern technologies make possible can open up the education system.[8]

When used effectively, technology applications can support higher-order thinking by engaging students in authentic, complex tasks within collaborative learning contexts.[9] These important "learning skills" enable people to acquire new knowledge and skills, connect new information to existing knowledge, analyze, develop habits of learning and work with others to use information.[10] Higher-order thinking and problem solving is an essential skill for all students as they face a future where they switch jobs far more frequently than past generations and will need to adapt and adjust to changing demands.

Education technology is increasingly important in light of the changed learning needs and styles of today's students. Today's students are growing up in a digital world and are masters of technology. They seamlessly integrate multiple technology tools and digital resources into their daily lives. Yet, too often, they are forced to leave these skills and aptitudes at the classroom door. As a result, students are increasingly disengaged in school and forced to adapt to a learning process and medium that contrasts significantly to that which is most comfortable

and successful for them. Therefore, technology that is carefully deployed in learning can engage and motivate students. For example, students say that, when they use the Internet, their motivation to learn and their academic performance improve. They complete their schoolwork more quickly, they are less likely to be stymied by material they do not understand, and their papers and projects are more likely to draw upon up-to-date sources and state-of-the-art knowledge. They also feel they are better at juggling their school assignments and extracurricular activities when aided by technology.[11]

Technology as a Tool for Teachers and Teaching

Technology can assist with aspects of professional development that ultimately can lead to better teaching. For example, follow-up assistance for teachers after they return to the classroom is an essential part of professional development that often is skipped because of the expense. Telecommunications technologies, however, allow coaches and mentors to be offsite but still answer questions, conduct seminars and offer support via e-mail or teleconferencing. Telecommunications also allow teachers who often may be isolated, to discuss the issues that arise when they are making changes to their practice.[12] A project in Iowa that has used technology to build professional learning communities also is finding that students in classrooms taught by teachers who are participating in the project are raising their test scores and showing signs of narrowing the achievement gap.[13]

Picture It: How Technology Supports Data-Driven Decision Making

Imagine an afternoon when a teacher can access a stationary computer or mobile digital device and quickly sort through reams of data stored and organized electronically to plan lessons for the next day. She'll review attendance records and test scores, ranging from the students' first years in school up to that very day. She'll see the courses her students have taken and every grade they've received. She'll compare each student's achievement against state standards to decide who needs review and who is ready to move on. All the information will be available by clicking a mouse and keying in a few words here and there. After her planning period, the teacher will have prepared lessons to match the needs of the students she'll see in class the next day.[14]

Now imagine that a parent, sitting at his or her home computer, can see the same information on the child as the teacher. Maybe the parent is able to see the lesson plan for the next day and use it to help prepare the child for what's ahead or when the child misses a day of school. The parent is able to see grades received on assignments, truancy reports and absences, and can use the information to help track the child's progress. Biannual parent-teacher conferences are supplemented with regular e-mail communication, using the up-to-date information on the student found in secure student information systems.

This scenario already is possible, but is too rarely found in classrooms today. The data systems infrastructure needed to support such applications do not exist in many places. According to Education Week, only five states—Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, Ohio and Tennessee—have advanced data systems for both students and teachers and the ability to link information from these two systems.[15]

Costs and Benefits of Implementing the Schools Interoperability Framework

Interoperability defined: The ability of software and hardware on multiple machines from multiple vendors to communicate.[16]

Student achievement has increased in schools and districts that have ensured seamless integration of information systems using the Schools Interoperability Framework (SIF). SIF defines the rules for data movement between applications, setting the standards for integration. Case studies found that districts that are using SIF standards in their implementation of data-driven decision making:

- Increased student achievement by raising test scores 30 percent through differentiating instruction, or "customizing" lessons and time with students to target their specific needs.
- Reduced data entry time, while allowing improved reporting capability, avoiding a single hire despite the increased state and federal NCLB reporting requirements.
- Qualified for increased funding due to enhanced reporting and better data about students who are eligible for free and reduced-cost lunch.
- Improved student services in the library because the librarian can focus on serving students rather than on performing data entry.

The costs of implementing SIF standards can very widely, depending on the nature of the solution and the kind of infrastructure, hardware and software the district already has in place.

Source: Schools Interoperability Framework, "Analysis of Costs and Benefits Associated with Implementing SIF" (Bellingham, Wash.: Educational Systemics Inc., June 5, 2006).

Technology is becoming a powerful tool in using data to make informed decisions. Although state accountability systems and the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) act have been the catalysts to encourage districts to establish student information systems and data warehouses-allowing them to track and analyze tests scores, grades, attendance, etc.--the underlying goal of data-driven decision making is to increase student achievement. It does so by allowing teachers, administrators, parents and policymakers—each of whom has an important role in ensuring student learning—access to timely and comprehensive information that tells a story about a student's progress, problems and strengths.

Technology is an effective tool to improve productivity and efficiency. For example, in a 2004 survey of school leaders, 74 percent say technology provides timely data for decision making; 71 percent say it improves support staff efficiency; 71 percent say it increases administrators' productivity; 70 percent say it improves communications among parents, teachers and the community; and 61 percent say it increases teacher productivity.[17] Educator time is a scarce, costly and finite school resource. Technology helps maximize educational resources and impact.

Research on Technology's Effect on Student Achievement

Studies that isolate a particular technology to study its effect on some measure of student achievement find that well-implemented technology use can lead to improved student achievement. The following studies have been suggested by members of the NCSL Education Technology Partnership as studies that demonstrate increased student achievement as a result of using technology. Of course, as with all educational interventions and practices, a definitive relationship between computer use and student achievement is challenging to identify and

quantify since the link may depend on how the technology is used as well as on how achievement is defined and measured.[18]

Early studies sought to understand the effect of general computer use on student achievement. One large study conducted in 1994 found that, on average, students who used computer-based instruction scored at the 64th percentile on tests of achievement, compared to students in the control conditions without computers who scored at the 50th percentile. Although computers did not have a positive effect in every area in which they were studied, students who used them learned more in less time and reported enjoying their classes more.[19]

A similar study from 1998 found that both regular and special needs children in technology-rich environments experienced positive effects on achievement in all major subject areas in preschool through higher education. The research notes, however, that the level of effectiveness of educational technology is influenced by the specific student population, the software design, the educator's role, and the level of student access to the technology.[20]

A review of the research literature by the Software & Information Industry Association revealed positive and consistent patterns when students were engaged in technology-rich environments, including significant academic gains and achievement in all subject areas, increased achievement in preschool through high school for both regular and special needs students, improved attitudes toward learning, and increased self-esteem.[26]

States Show Improved Student Achievement with eMINTS

The Enhancing Missouri's Instructional Networked Teaching Strategies (eMINTS) program has been found to improve student achievement by improving the outcomes of students on test scores. Although it began in Missouri, the program has expanded to Illinois, Maine, Nevada and Utah. The program aims to inspire educators to use instructional strategies powered by technology, engage students in the excitement of learning, and enrich teaching to dramatically improve student performance. Extensive research and evaluation have demonstrated positive results on student achievement after implementation of this model.[21]

Test results show that, on most state tests, students enrolled in eMINTS classrooms score higher than students enrolled in non-eMINTS classrooms. In addition, low-income and special education students in eMINTS classes generally score higher than their non-eMINTS peers.[22] These results are encouraging, and it is important to recognize the various components of the program that contribute to its success. All eMINTS classrooms receive a variety of tools and support. Each teacher is part of a cluster and a cluster instructional specialist (CIS) is assigned to work with them. The CIS is available for consultation, support, facilitation and assistance in designing inquiry-based instructional experiences enhanced by technology. In addition, eMINTS classrooms have teacher workstations, interactive whiteboards, a computer for every two students, and related peripherals and software. Technical support is ample, as is the instructional support to ensure efficient operation of the classroom technologies and integration of the technologies into the curriculum.

Maine Is Learning How Laptop Program Supports Learning Goals

Maine has been a pioneer in providing laptops for all seventh and eighth grade students and teachers in the state. Research and evaluation of the program is ongoing, but initial findings from opinion surveys of students and teachers are positive. The results of teacher, student and principal surveys indicate that student use of the laptops for completing class work is higher for students who can take the laptops home. More than 70 percent of the teachers surveyed reported that the laptops helped them to more effectively meet their curriculum goals and individualize their curriculum to meet particular student needs. More than 75 percent of teachers reported that having the laptops helped them better meet Maine's statewide learning standards. More than 80 percent of teachers surveyed reported that students are more engaged in their learning, more actively involved in their own learning, and produce better quality work.[23]

More rigorous studies that evaluate the Maine laptop program's effect on student achievement are forthcoming.

The recent focus of the school improvement effort and NCLB has been on student achievement in reading and math. High-stakes testing and national and international comparisons often highlight these two content areas. There is now a gradual accumulation of evidence about the effect of technology on improving student performance in these areas.

Enhancing Sound in Classrooms to Benefit All Students

In 1977, the U.S. Department of Education began funding the initial investigation of what was to be a three-year investigation named the Mainstream Amplification Resource Room Study (MARRS Project). The results showed that all students, regardless of hearing ability, taught in sound enhanced rooms showed significant gains in academic achievement.[24] Most recently, *Technology and Learning Magazine* ranked providing sound field enhancements in classrooms one of the top return on investments schools can make with their technology funds.[25]

A review of the research literature by the Software & Information Industry Association revealed positive and consistent patterns when students were engaged in technology-rich environments, including significant academic gains and achievement in all subject areas, increased achievement in preschool through high school for both regular and special needs students, improved attitudes toward learning, and increased self-esteem.

A study that controlled for both prior achievement and socioeconomic status found that fourth-grade students who reported greater frequency of technology use at school to edit papers were likely to have higher total English/language arts test scores and higher writing scores on fourth grade test scores on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment Systems English/Language Arts test.[27]

A study that compared student test scores on writing and essay tests found that those students who used a computer to take the test performed significantly better than those who took the test using paper and pencil. Nearly 70 percent of the students who took the computer-based test performed "adequately" compared to only 30 percent of students who took the test using paper and pencil. The authors suggest that, for students who have been accustomed to writing on a computer for only a year or two, estimates of student writing abilities based on responses written by hand may be substantial underestimates of their abilities to write when using a computer.[28]

A study in the Journal of Science Education and Technology examined the relationship between computer use and students' science achievement based on data from a standardized assessment. It found it is not the computer use itself that has a positive or negative effect on achievement, but the way in which computers are used.[29] For example, an Educational Testing Service study found that using computers to teach low-order thinking skills such as drill and practice had a negative effect on academic achievement, while using computers to solve simulations significantly increased students math scores.[30]

A 2002 study of Cognitive Tutor Algebra 1 on ninth grade students enrolled in algebra courses found that students who used the software tutor performed better than those who did not. This proved true for students across teachers, for male and female students, and for students of different ethnicity. Students who engaged with the software also were more likely to rate math as useful than students in a traditional class, and they were more likely to report that they were confident in math. Other studies of Cognitive Tutor have demonstrated that students participating in the program performed 85 percent better on average on assessments of complex math problem solving and thinking. In addition, students enrolled in Cognitive Tutor Algebra I have been shown to be 69 percent more likely to pass traditional geometry and 71 percent more likely to pass traditional algebra II.[31] The U.S. Department of Education, in a review of literature on middle school math interventions, included Cognitive Tutor, as well as another software program called I CAN LEARN, to be among the only interventions that the department reviewed with rigorous evidence of improving student achievement.[32]

When considering distance and virtual learning's effect on student achievement, it is important to recognize that this delivery method can transform education simply because it allows new and enhanced access to courses and curriculum that otherwise is often not available. In West Virginia, the Legislature required challenging courses for middle school students to prepare them for a rigorous high school program. Rural, isolated schools that had no access to a certified Spanish teacher and would not otherwise receive the course were offered Spanish I through a distance learning program. These students performed as well as those who had certified teachers in face-to-face instruction and, as the Spanish II teachers in high school report, they are equally accomplished and often are better prepared than those who had the traditional course.[33]

Research findings have shown no significant difference between online learning and face-to-face instruction—an indication that learning outcomes can be accomplished without a direct encounter with an instructor.[34] In fact, the International Journal of Educational Telecommunications found a small positive effect in favor of distance education and more positive effects for distance education programs that combine an individualized approach with traditional classroom instruction.[35]

Overall, research has established that properly implemented technology initiatives can improve student achievement, engage the digital native learner, and provide important technological skills to the future workforce. Most importantly, research reveals lessons learned about how to successfully use technology in education. As previously mentioned, this includes:

- Technology is best used as one component in a broad-based reform effort.
- Teachers must be adequately trained to use technology.
- Technological resources must be sufficient and accessible.
- Effective technology use requires long-term planning and support.
- Technology should be integrated into the curricular and instructional framework.[36]

The above studies are a small sample of the research that examines technology's effect on student achievement. State policymakers are encouraged to contact NCSL with questions about implementation of a specific technology, policy strategies to ensure its effectiveness, and additional examples of successful schools and districts that have linked technology to improved student achievement.

Conclusion

Although research that seeks to understand technology's effect on student achievement will require ongoing effort, existing evidence is compelling that, with effective implementation, technology can lead to improved student outcomes. Policymakers may want to consider their own role in ensuring that education technology initiatives are sufficiently evaluated to draw lessons from emerging and developing strategies. Although the uniqueness of each school and classroom situation will always need to be considered, the accumulation of research evidence over time and across studies should provide consistent findings that enhance understanding of the role of teaching and learning with technology.[37]

Additional Resources

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Notes

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2. Marc Prensky, "Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants," *On The Horizon* 9, no. 5 (October 2001).

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Alaska

TECHNOLOGY COUNTS 2007

A Special State-Focused
Supplement to *Education Week*'s
Technology Counts 2007

EPE RC RESEARCH CENTER

About This Report

This *State Technology Report* is a supplement to the 10th edition of *Technology Counts*, a joint project of *Education Week* and the Editorial Projects in Education Research Center. As in previous years, the EPE Research Center has surveyed the states to assess the status of K-12 educational technology across the nation. This state report assembles key findings from that survey and other sources in a format that allows readers to examine a particular state's performance on this year's indicators. For most indicators, national results are also provided as a benchmark against which the state can be measured. *Technology Counts 2007*, which explores developments in educational technology over the past decade, tracks data from the 50 states and the District of Columbia in several critical areas of technology policy and practice: access, use, and capacity. The report assigns grades to the states for their performance in those three categories. State grades are not comparable with those in last year's report because of changes in two access indicators and improvements in the scoring for indicators related to teacher and administrator licensure. The full *Technology Counts 2007* report can be accessed online at www.edweek.org/go/tc07.

STATE TECHNOLOGY REPORT CARD 2007

	Alaska	How did the average state score?
Access to technology	**C**	C
Use of technology	**B-**	C+
Capacity to use technology	**B-**	C
Overall grade	**C+**	C+

Grading the States

For *Technology Counts 2007*, the EPE Research Center awarded grades for technology leadership to the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Grading is based on 14 individual indicators spanning three core areas of state policy and practice: access to instructional technology, use of technology, and capacity to effectively use educational technology.

Information on technology use and capacity was obtained from a nationwide survey of state technology officials conducted by the EPE Research Center. Indicators related to educational technology access were derived from annual school surveys conducted by Market Data Retrieval, a research company that tracks the use of educational technology, and from background questionnaires administered as part of the 2005 National Assessment of Educational Progress.

The EPE Research Center evaluated each indicator, assigning a certain number of points to each. States received credit for the use and capacity indicators only if they could document that the respective policy or practice was in place. Points were tallied within each of the three technology categories, producing scores on a 100-point scale. To generate an overall score, the Research Center computed the average of the three category scores and then converted that total score to a letter grade.

Technology Counts Grading Breakdown

This table reports the detailed scoring behind the grades for the three major areas of state policy examined in *Technology Counts*.

Access to Technology

	Alaska	U.S.
Percent of students with ...		
Computer in classroom	**41.5%**	49.5%
Computer in lab/media center	**68.5%**	77.0%
Number of students per ...		
Instructional computer	**3.2**	3.8
High-speed Internet-connected computer	**3.3**	3.7

Use of Technology

	Does state have policy?	Number of states with policy
Student standards include technology	**Yes**	48
State tests students on technology	**No**	4
State has established a virtual school	**Yes**	23
State offers computer-based assessments	**No**	23

Capacity to Use Technology

	Does state have policy?	Number of states with policy
State includes technology in its ...		
Teacher standards	**Yes**	45
Administrator standards	**Yes**	36
Initial teacher-license requirements	**No**	19
Initial administrator-license requirements	**No**	9
Teacher-recertification requirements	**Yes**	9
Administrator-recertification requirements	**No**	5

Overall Technology Score

	Alaska points awarded	Average state points awarded
Access to technology	**73.5**	76.0
Use of technology	**79.5**	78.7
Capacity to use technology	**79.5**	75.5
Total score (average of three categories)	**77.5**	**76.7**

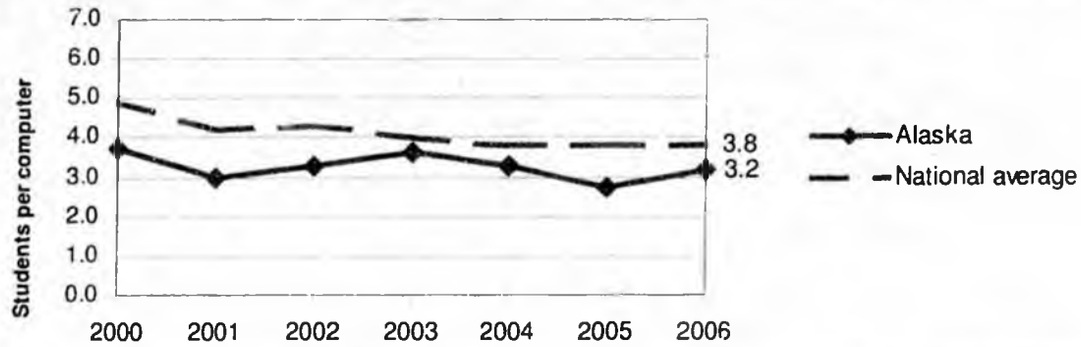
Grading Curve A (93-100), A- (90-92), B+ (87-89), B (83-86), B- (80-82), C+ (77-79), C (73-76), C- (70-72), D+ (67-69), D (63-66), D- (60-62), F (0-59)

Technology Access

Note: Indicators of access to technology capture the number of students who share computers used for instructional purposes. Lower values on these measures indicate greater levels of access.

Trends in access

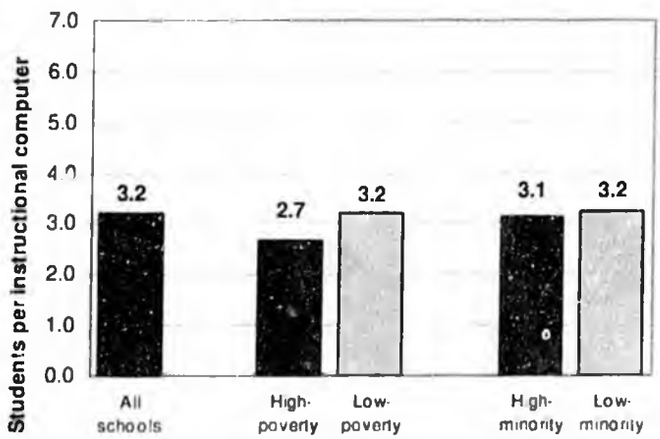
This chart tracks student access to instructional computers over time.



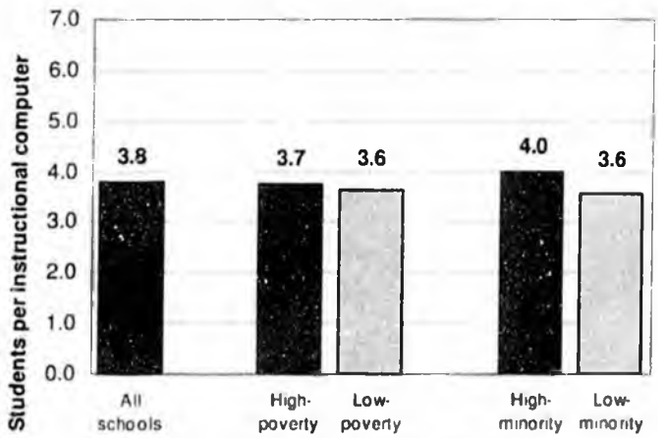
Students per instructional computer

These charts show the average number of students sharing access to each computer available for instructional purposes for public schools in this state and the nation as a whole during the 2005-06 school year.

Alaska



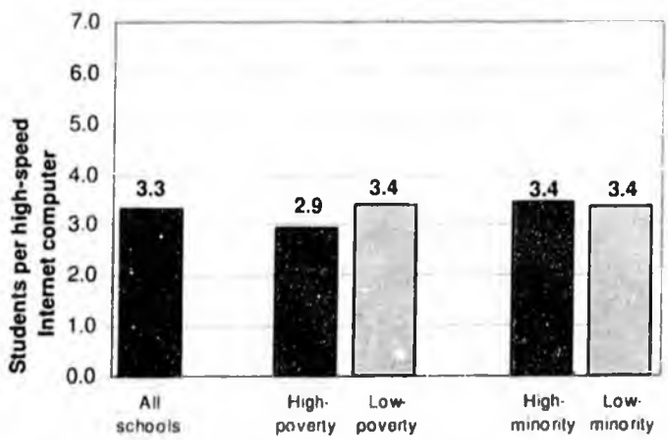
U.S. Average



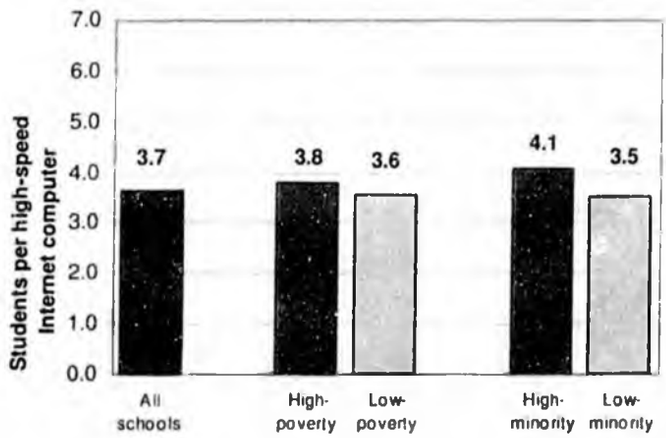
Students per high-speed Internet computer

These charts show the average number of students sharing access to each instructional computer with high-speed Internet access for public schools in your state and the nation as a whole during the 2005-06 school year.

Alaska



U.S. Average



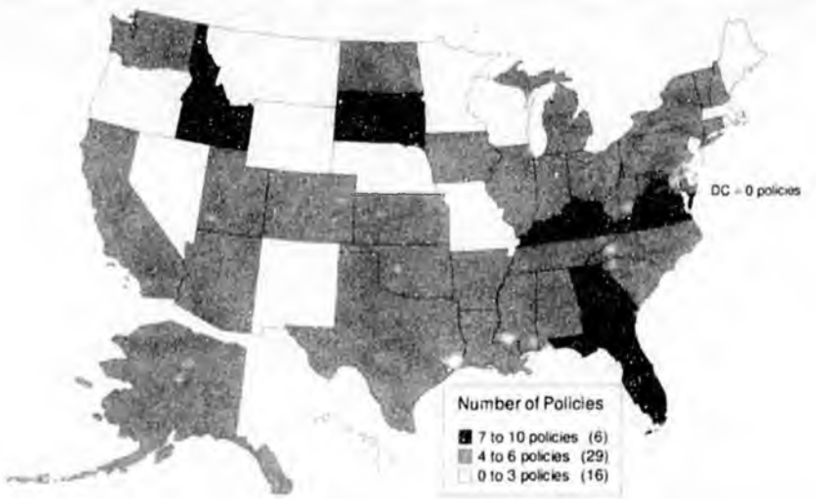
Technology Use and Capacity Policies

National Perspective

This map shows the number of technology use and capacity policies in place for the 2006-07 school year for each state and the District of Columbia.

The EPE Research Center has examined state technology use and capacity policies. Ten key policies, listed on the first page of this state report, are summarized in this map.

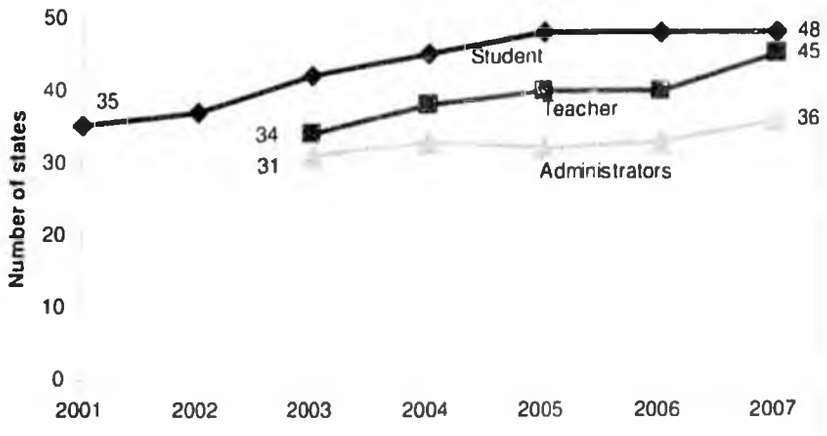
The states with the strongest use and capacity policies are Georgia (10 policies) and Kentucky (8 policies). At the other end of the spectrum, Montana and Nevada each have one policy, while the District of Columbia has adopted none of the policies.



Technology Standards

Past & Present

This chart tracks the number of states that have technology standards for students, teachers, and administrators.



The EPE Research Center has been tracking technology standards for students since 2001 and technology standards for teachers and administrators since 2003.

The vast majority of states (48) have embraced technology standards for students for the past few years. Almost as many states (45) now have such standards for teachers, while fewer states (36) have them for administrators. Overall, 2007 shows an increase in states endorsing teacher and administrator standards in technology.

Alaska Technology Standards	2001/ 2003	2007
Students	Yes	Yes
Teachers	No	Yes
Administrators	No	Yes

Extra Credit—Integrating Technology

Supporting Educators	Alaska	Nation
State facilitates access to online academic content and/or instructional software (CD or Web-based) through ...		
Group-purchasing program *Digital content available at lower prices because o. state negotiations*	No	17 states
Collection of online resources from different academic areas *Digital content to supplement learning that can be accessed through a state Web site or portal*	Yes	26 states
Subscription services *Electronic resources, such as e-journals, online indexes, and full-text databases, available through a commercial provider*	No	29 states
State offers teachers online opportunities ...		
Professional development online, such as courses or virtual training *May include technology-related professional development or professional development in other areas*	Yes	39 states
State offers professional or financial incentives to use technology for ...		
Teachers	No	17 states
Administrators	No	13 states
Number of policies:	2	---

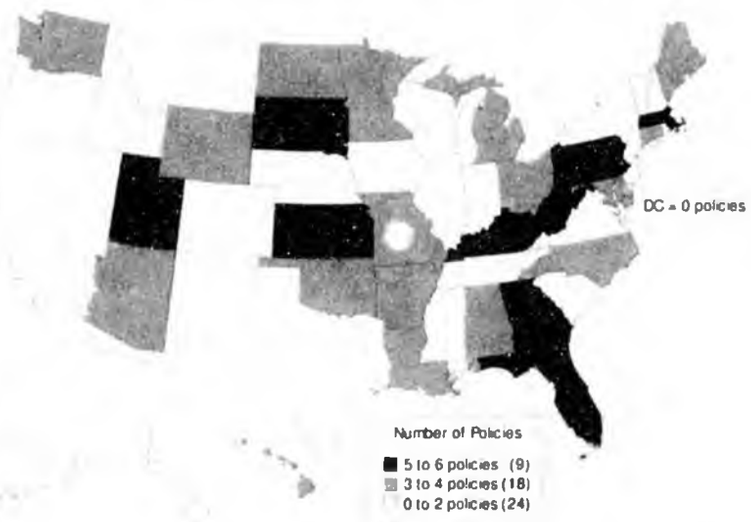
Educator Technology-Integration Policies

A National Perspective

This map shows the number of educator technology-integration policies (listed above) for each state.

Integration of digital resources in schools is not regular and comprehensive, according to anecdotal reports and research. For that reason, state policies to help educators—such as offering access to digital content, online professional development, and incentives—can help maximize the potential of educational technology.

Just two states (Kentucky and West Virginia) have all six technology-integration policies discussed above. Nearly half of states have two or fewer policies.



Sources and Notes

State Technology Indicators

Most of the state policy indicators reported in *Technology Counts* are obtained through an original policy survey conducted annually by the Editorial Projects in Education Research Center. The Research Center sent surveys to the chief state technology officers in all 50 states and to the superintendent of the District of Columbia public schools. Respondents provided information on policy indicators related to educational technology, and competencies of students and educators. Every state response was carefully verified using additional evidence provided by the state, such as documentation describing a state statute or administrative rule.

For some indicators on access to technology, the EPE Research Center obtained information from Market Data Retrieval, or MDR, a research organization in Shelton, Conn., that tracks trends in educational technology, and from the National Assessment of Educational Progress, conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics.

Grading the States

For *Technology Counts 2007*, the EPE Research Center graded state leadership in the areas of technology access, use, and capacity, based on data compiled for 14 individual indicators of state policy and practice. Each indicator was evaluated and assigned a certain number of points, with some indicators receiving greater weight than others. States were not awarded credit for an indicator unless they were able to document that the respective policy was in place.

The Research Center tallied points within each of the three policy categories on a 100-point scale. These three subscores were averaged to produce an overall technology score, which was then converted to a letter grade. A detailed explanation of the grading methodology can be found in the full edition of *Technology Counts 2007*.

Technology Access

Students per instructional computer: Market Data Retrieval, "2005-06 Public School Technology Survey" and unpublished tabulations from MDR's Public School Technology Surveys (2000-2005).

Students per high-speed Internet-connected computer: Ibid.

For the purposes of this report, high-poverty schools are those in which more than half of students are eligible for the federal free or reduced-price lunch program. High-minority schools are those in which more than half the students belong to minority racial or ethnic groups.

Percent of students with computer in classroom: National Assessment of Educational Progress, National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education, 2005. This figure represents the percent of public school students in grades 4 and 8 whose math teachers reported that at least one computer was available to students in their classrooms. Figures for grades 4 and 8 were averaged.

Percent of students with computer in lab/media center: Ibid. This figure represents the percent of public school students in grades 4 and 8 whose math teachers reported that at least one computer was available to students in a lab or media center. Figures for grades 4 and 8 were averaged.

Technology Use & Capacity

Editorial Projects in Education Research Center annual state technology survey, 2007. Survey respondents were asked about state policies that promote technology use and capacity. States received credit for an indicator only when they provided clear evidence that the respective policy or practice was currently in place.

Extra Credit

Editorial Projects in Education Research Center annual state technology survey, 2007. Survey respondents were asked about state policies that help teachers gain access to digital academic resources, and provide educators with incentives to use technology, as well as online professional-development opportunities. States received credit for an indicator only when they provided clear evidence that the respective policy or practice was currently in place.

About Editorial Projects in Education

Editorial Projects in Education (EPE) is a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization based in Bethesda, Md. Our primary mission is to help raise the level of awareness and understanding among professionals and the public of important issues in American education. We cover local, state, national, and international news and issues from preschool through the 12th grade. Editorial Projects in Education Inc. publishes *Education Week*, America's newspaper of record for precollegiate education, *Teacher Magazine*, edweek.org, and the Agent K-12 employment resource. We also produce periodic special reports on issues ranging from technology to textbooks, as well as books of special interest to educators.

The ***EPE Research Center*** conducts annual policy surveys, collects data, and performs analyses that appear in the *Quality Counts*, *Technology Counts*, and *Diplomas Count* annual reports. The center also produces independent research reports and contributes original data and analysis to special coverage in *Education Week*, *Teacher Magazine*, and edweek.org.

HB

386

Alaska State House of Representatives

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Sponsor Statement from:

Representative Gabrielle LeDoux

R - District 36

RELEASED: February 20, 2008 **CONTACT**: Thomas Brown, 465-6252

HB386 - Energy Subsidy For Schools

"An Act relating to an energy subsidy for public schools."

Status: (H) HES : 2008-02-19

HB 386 grants state aid to pay 50 percent of a public school's energy costs for fiscal years 2007 through 2009. Those schools which submit an energy usage bill related to the cost of operation for the school for fiscal years 2007 through 2009 will be eligible to have half of those costs subsidized.

The energy bills must be submitted in a manner which satisfies the Department of Education and Early Development in order to qualify for the subsidy. This aid is separate from any state aid already received. For the purposes of this subsidy no distinction between varying types of energy sources are considered.

# # #

House Majority Press: http://housemajority.org/spon.php?id=25HB386

LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH REPORT

MARCH 12, 2008

REPORT NUMBER 08.199

ENERGY COSTS IN ALASKA SCHOOL DISTRICTS

PREPARED FOR REPRESENTATIVE GABRIELLE LEDOUX

BY TIM SPENGLER, LEGISLATIVE ANALYST

You asked for information regarding energy costs for school districts in Alaska. Specifically, you wanted to know what each district's energy costs were for the last three years and whether any districts use alternative energy sources.

The table on the following page contains actual energy costs for districts for fiscal years 2005-2007. These figures were provided by Eddie Jeans, Director of School Finance for the Department of Education and Early Development.[1] Mr. Jean informed us that "energy costs" included electricity and fuel costs. We also queried the superintendents in all Alaska school districts and received estimates from many of them regarding energy costs for fiscal year 2008. We also relay this information in the table.

Only two of the 37 districts that have at this time responded to our query reported using alternative fuel sources. Bristol Bay and Denali Borough districts both report using waste heat from electric companies for a portion of their fuel needs.[2] We received numerous comments from superintendents that they would like to explore alternative energy sources because the cost of traditional fuel continues to rise.

I hope you find this information to be useful. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have questions or need additional information.

---

[1] Eddie Jeans can be reached at 465-8679

[2] Waste heat is heat produced by machines and/or technical processes for which no useful application is usually found

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State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801

Department of Education and Early Development
Energy Cost Analysis - HB 386
Updated 3/10/2008

School District	Actual FY07 Energy Costs	Forecasted FY2008 Energy Costs **	Forecasted FY2009 Energy Costs ***	SB386 Cost to State for FY2007 Paid in FY2008	SB386 Projected Cost to State for FY2008 Paid in FY2009	SB386 Projected Cost to State for FY2008 Paid in FY2009
Alaska Gateway	867,666	1,140,113	1,357,875	433,833	570,057	678,938
Aleutian Region	86,274	113,364	135,017	43,137	56,682	67,509
Aleutians East Borough	559,959	735,786	876,321	279,980	367,893	438,161
Anchorage	12,303,717	16,167,084	19,254,997	6,151,859	8,083,542	9,627,499
Annette Island	191,113	251,122	299,086	95,557	125,561	149,543
Bering Strait	3,384,042	4,446,631	5,295,938	1,692,021	2,223,316	2,647,969
Bristol Bay Borough	274,456	360,635	429,516	137,228	180,318	214,758
Chatham	302,481	397,460	473,375	151,241	198,730	236,688
Chugach	107,456	141,197	168,166	53,728	70,599	84,083
Copper River	522,672	686,791	817,968	261,336	343,396	408,984
Cordova	398,065	523,057	622,961	199,033	261,529	311,481
Craig	208,251	273,642	325,908	104,126	136,821	162,954
Delta/Greely	478,235	628,401	748,426	239,118	314,201	374,213
Denali Borough	434,355	570,742	679,754	217,178	285,371	339,877
Dillingham	453,905	596,431	710,349	226,953	298,216	355,175
Fairbanks N. Star Borough	4,841,662	6,361,944	7,577,075	2,420,831	3,180,972	3,788,538
Galena	708,204	930,580	1,108,321	354,102	465,290	554,161
Haines Borough	276,813	363,732	433,205	138,407	181,866	216,603
Hoonah	253,824	333,525	397,228	126,912	166,763	198,614
Hydaburg	16,067	21,112	25,144	8,034	10,556	12,572
Iditarod Area	633,243	832,081	991,008	316,622	416,041	495,504
Juneau Borough	1,263,619	1,660,395	1,977,530	631,810	830,198	988,765
Kake	229,319	301,325	358,878	114,660	150,663	179,439
Kashunamiut	261,332	343,390	408,977	130,666	171,695	204,489
Kenai Peninsula Borough	4,461,621	5,862,570	6,982,321	2,230,811	2,931,285	3,491,161
Ketchikan Gateway Borough	965,989	1,269,310	1,511,748	482,995	634,655	755,874
Klawock	111,588	146,627	174,633	55,794	73,314	87,317
Kodiak Island Borough	1,762,874	2,316,416	2,758,851	881,437	1,158,208	1,379,426
Kuspuk	234,370	307,962	366,783	117,185	153,981	183,392
Lake & Peninsula Borough	1,058,782	1,391,240	1,656,967	529,391	695,620	828,484
Lower Kuskokwim	3,504,318	4,604,674	5,484,167	1,752,159	2,302,337	2,742,08[illegible]
Lower Yukon	2 138,577	2,810,090	3,346,817	1,069,289	1,405,045	1,673,409
Mat-Su Borough	3,515,672	4,619,593	5,501,935	1,757,836	2,309,797	2,750,968
Nenana	258,639	339,852	404,764	129,320	169,926	202,382
Nome	967,611	1,271,441	1,514,286	483,806	635,721	757,143
North Slope Borough	2,682,839	3,525,250	4,198,573	1,341,420	1,762,625	2,099,287
Northwest Arctic Borough	4,077,785	5,358,209	6,381,627	2,038,893	2,679,105	3,190,814
Pelican	23,030	30,261	36,041	11,515	15,131	18,021
Petersburg	479,630	630,234	750,609	239,815	315,117	375,305
Pribilof	180,870	237,663	283,057	90,435	118,832	141,529
Saint Mary's	188,115	247,183	294,395	94,058	123,592	147,198
Sitka Borough	705,707	927,299	1,104,413	352,854	463,650	552,207
Skagway	91,441	120,153	143,102	45,721	60,077	71,551
Southeast Island	252,034	331,173	394,427	126,017	165,587	197,214
Southwest Region	1,303,908	1,713,335	2,040,582	651,954	856,668	1,020,291
Tanana	171,818	225,769	268,891	85,909	112,885	134,446
Unalaska	393,749	517,386	616,207	196,875	258,693	308,104
Valdez	523,592	688,000	819,408	261,796	344,000	409,704
Wrangell	212,424	279,125	332,438	106,212	139,563	166,219
Yakutat	147,583	193,924	230,963	73,792	96,962	115,482
Yukon Flats	869,488	1,142,507	1,360,726	434,744	571,254	680,363
Yukon/Koyukuk	859,831	1,129,818	1,345,613	429,916	564,909	672,807
Yupiit	1,033,876	1,358,513	1,617,989	516,938	679,257	808,995
Mt. Edgecumbe	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	**62,234,491**	**81,776,117**	**97,395,356**	**31,117,259**	**40,888,072**	**48,697,694**

*** Forecasted numbers come from the Energy information Administration(EIA) which shows an estimated 31.4% increase in heating fuel per gallon from winter 06-07 to winter 07-08. This number represents FY07 actual plus 31.4%*

**** Forecasted numbers are based on a 5 year average increase of 19.1%*

Total Costs	
FY07	31,117,259
FY08	40,888,072
FY09	48,697,694
Cost for HB386	120,703,025

Energy Costs in Alaska School Districts

School District	FY05 Actuals	FY06 Actuals	FY07 Actuals	FY08 Estimates
Alaska Gateway	651,687	707,763	857,666	841,407
Aleutian Region	29,204	46,413	86,274	107,000
Aleutians East Borough	437,660	541,015	559,959	
Anchorage	9,372,030	11,165,877	12,303,717	15,548,310
Annette Island	175,676	182,516	191,113	223,840
Bering Strait	2,152,863	3,005,405	3,384,042	3,550,000
Bristol Bay Borough	212,270	230,581	274,456	318,157
Chatham	229,724	265,837	302,481	300,000
Chugach	45,073	54,930	107,456	180,000
Copper River	390,944	509,818	522,672	723,321
Cordova	293,971	331,430	398,065	438,000
Craig	163,978	-	208,251	
Delta/Greely	242,699	429,720	478,235	589,509
Denali Borough	315,025	404,530	434,355	
Dillingham	338,954	412,651	453,905	440,000
Fairbanks N. Star Borough	3,738,135	4,603,356	4,841,662	5,786,648
Galena	468,915	990,026	708,204	1,078,935
Haines Borough	224,813	264,427	276,813	300,000
Hoonah	183,391	223,746	253,824	
Hydaburg[a]	100,726	15,676	16,067	188,439
Iditarod Area	441,165	535,569	633,243	733,581
Juneau Borough	942,545	1,030,558	1,263,619	1,264,589
Kake	147,412	191,190	229,319	240,000
Kashunamiut	153,765	315,844	261,332	
Kenai Peninsula Borough	3,501,901	4,313,842	4,461,621	5,678,086
Ketchikan Gateway Borough	649,590	812,073	965,989	1,260,000
Klawock	104,703	123,441	111,588	138,707
Kodiak Island Borough	1,346,996	1,655,091	1,762,874	1,850,000
Kuspuk	389,522	234,387	234,370	
Lake & Peninsula Borough	744,215	869,425	1,058,782	1,245,000
Lower Kuskokwim	2,483,987	2,996,952	3,504,318	4,072,314
Lower Yukon	1,480,687	1,249,076	2,138,577	
Mat-Su Borough	2,548,024	2,926,442	3,515,672	3,807,950
Nenana	188,793	262,585	258,639	318,000
Nome	543,146	767,474	967,611	
North Slope Borough	2,123,944	2,658,473	2,682,839	
Northwest Arctic Borough	2,809,940	3,382,486	4,077,785	4,453,723
Pelican	44,296	38,510	23,030	44,000
Petersburg	415,053	434,133	479,630	
Pribilof	118,629	168,080	180,870	265,000
Saint Mary's	101,082	165,512	188,115	213,000
Sitka Borough	485,987	661,064	705,707	854,941
Skagway	57,276	76,116	91,441	100,629
Southeast Island	208,426	215,644	252,034	
Southwest Region	870,389	1,072,935	1,303,908	
Tanana	93,301	109,603	171,818	
Unalaska	268,943	288,929	393,749	816,667
Valdez	427,858	574,780	523,592	
Wrangell	153,569	187,726	212,424	243,528
Yakutat	118,611	142,714	147,583	
Yukon Flats	598,963	840,902	869,488	
Yukon/Koyukuk	586,426	755,295	859,831	902,095
Yupiit	471,525	504,298	1,033,876	
Mt. Edgecumbe	404,477			797,718
Total	**45,792,884**	**54,946,866**	**62,234,491**	

Notes: Energy costs include electricity and fuel costs. (a) Hydaburg district staff provided us with much larger figures for FY 06 and FY 07. They are working with the Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) to sort out the discrepencies.

Sources: Actuals for FY 05-07 provided by Eddie Jeans, Director of School Finances, DEED. Estimates for FY 08 provided by individual districts.

Cordova School District
Electric and Fuel Costs

Fuel Cost

	FY03	FY04	FY05	FY06	FY07
Mt. Eccles	$30,179	$36,153	$48,255	$57,340	$91,381
District Office	$1,838	$1,209	$1,417	$2,251	$3,448
High School	$29,419	$31,203	$48,582	$63,247	$81,484
Total	$61,436	$68,665	$98,254	$122,838	$176,313
% Increase from prior year		111.77%	143.09%	125.02%	143.53%

Fuel for 7 months (July-January)

FY03	FY07	FY08
$15,405	$47,186	$65,092
$16,182	$46,410	$52,163
$434	$2,021	$1,982
$32,021	$95,617	$119,237
Increase since FY07		124.70%
Increase since FY03		372.37%

Electric Cost

	FY03	FY04	FY05	FY06	FY07
Mt. Eccles	$68,096	$80,453	$92,331	$101,260	$103,184
High School	$84,058	$91,410	$101,717	$105,748	$115,560
Total	$152,154	$171,863	$194,048	$207,008	$218,744
% Increase from prior year		112.95%	112.91%	106.68%	105.67%

Electric for 7 months (July-January)

FY03	FY07	FY08
$34,928	$54,955	$55,301
$45,070	$60,878	$60,227
$79,998	$115,833	$115,528
Decrease since FY07		99.74%
Increase since FY03		144.41%

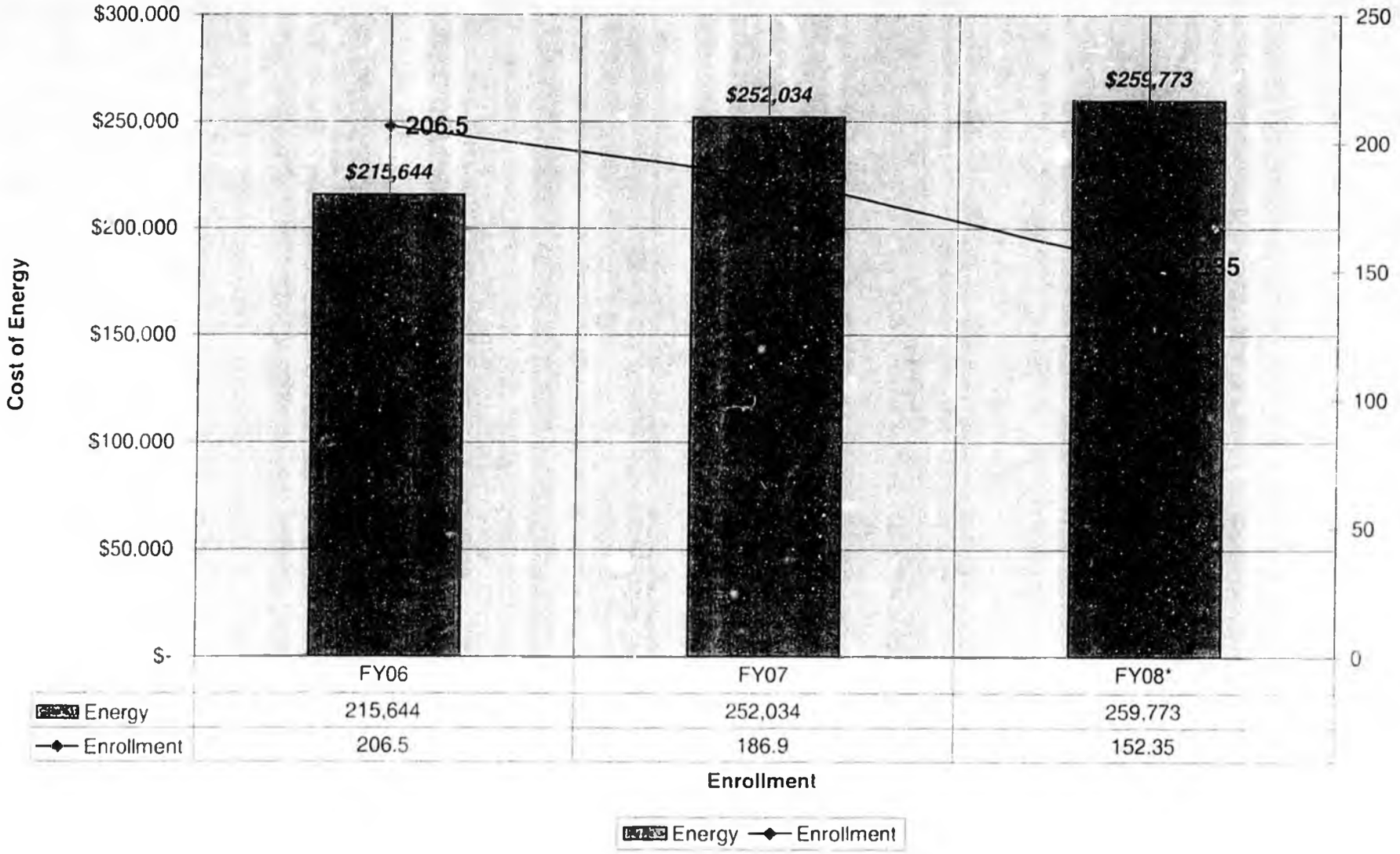
Total Fuel by Month

Month	FY03	FY04	FY05	FY06	FY07	FY08
July	$2,079	$3,134	$3,077	$4,659	$9,687	$10,973
August	$2,677	$3,604	$3,036	$3,849	$9,345	$5,870
September	$823	$3,541	$3,860	$5,600	$11,328	$8,327
October	$5,889	$3,830	$6,670	$9,703	$12,623	$13,673
November	$5,233	$7,203	$10,446	$15,528	$20,909	$34,142
December	$5,985	$6,383	$10,110	$10,906	$13,191	$19,673
January	$9,335	$7,329	$12,787	$12,983	$18,534	$26,579
February	$6,656	$9,496	$14,409	$13,875	$22,136	
March	$7,443	$9,562	$9,639	$15,265	$17,813	
April	$6,453	$7,230	$13,784	$10,170	$16,943	
May	$5,191	$4,638	$5,274	$12,554	$8,396	
June	$3,672	$2,715	$5,162	$7,746	$15,408	
Total	$61,436	$68,665	$98,254	$122,838	$176,313	$119,237

Total Electric by Month

Month	FY03	FY04	FY05	FY06	FY07	FY08
July	$6,799	$6,778	$8,560	$8,454	$9,139	$8,490
August	$7,828	$8,832	$11,359	$11,082	$12,823	$11,578
September	$12,643	$15,576	$15,569	$16,118	$17,165	$16,641
October	$12,722	$14,366	$18,028	$16,516	$18,323	$17,031
November	$12,679	$14,598	$17,502	$18,737	$16,383	$18,760
December	$12,748	$15,653	$16,074	$18,782	$18,490	$18,289
January	$14,579	$14,630	$17,845	$18,867	$23,510	$24,739
February	$15,887	$20,441	$20,341	$21,641	$23,836	
March	$15,953	$16,662	$18,839	$19,779	$20,904	
April	$18,074	$18,291	$19,859	$23,034	$25,793	
May	$15,546	$16,010	$18,323	$22,887	$21,582	
June	$6,696	$10,026	$11,749	$11,111	$10,796	
Total	$152,154	$171,863	$194,048	$207,008	$218,744	$115,528

SOUTHEAST ISLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT
Energy Compared to Enrollment



SOUTHEAST ISLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT

FY	Energy	Enrollment
FY06	215,644	206.5
FY07	252,034	186.9
FY08*	259,773	152.35

<< Heating Fuel & Electricity >>

Year		St. George School	St. Paul School	Both Schools		Enrollment	Cost Per Student
2001		$32,587.69	$87,467.37	$120,055.06	Actual	144	$833.72
2007	*	$32,746.63	$86,771.71	$119,518.34	Actual	123	$971.69
2008		$61,000.00	$120,000.00	$181,000.00	Budget	111.6	$1,621.86
2009		$75,000.00	$130,000.00	$205,000.00	Budget	112	$1,830.36

* New heating and HVAC systems in both schools in 2007.

Year	Teachers
2001	14
2007	12
2008	10
2009	9

2001 - 2007

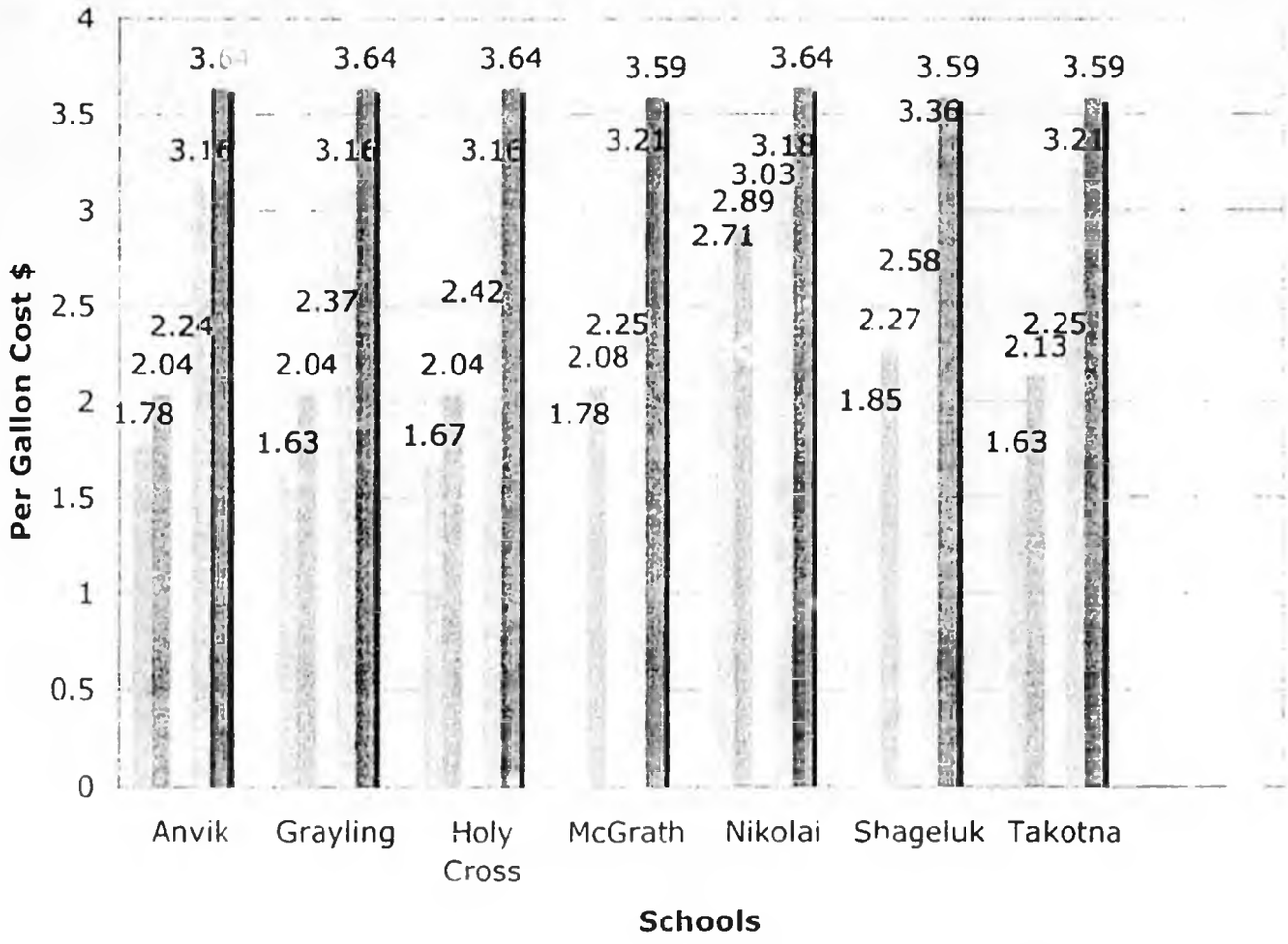
Student Enrollment
Iditarod Area School District

School	###	###	###	###	###	###	###	2008(proj.)	% decrease from 2001
Blackwell,Anvik	27	22	23	24	28	25	18	14	48%
David Louis,Grayling	58	61	52	62	45	42	43	44	24%
DLC	289	236	95	94	75	94	100	100	65%
Holy Cross	60	63	59	53	55	43	45	45	25%
Innoko River,Shageluk	36	35	35	36	34	31	20	14	61%
Lime Village	13	15	15	12	14	10	(6 closed)		
McGrath	103	93	86	76	65	57	53	55	47%
Takotna	15	21	21	16	14	14	14	12	20%
Top of Kuskokwim Nikolai	16	20	21	16	21	19	10	10	38%
	617	566	407	389	351	335	303	294	

District student loss from 2001 to 2007 not counting DLC **62%**

The challenge is how can we keep people in our communities ? Families continue to move out of all communities across the interior of Alaska.

Heating Fuel Cost Per Gallon IASD Schools 2004-2008



Cost Increases
Iditarod Area School District
February 2008

As all cost increase IASD has experienced a 62% decline in enrollment.

Food

From July 2006 to September 2007 purchase price for all food necessary to operate lunch programs has increased over 30%.

Total electricity for the district for the past three-year's (all schools and district office).

2005 $242,179
2006 $281,903
2007 $298,701
Percent of increase in electricity cost from 2005 to 2007 23%

Water and sewer

Has increased over 300% since August 2006.

When local utilities change ownership the school district cost increases.

One local water system went from $200 a month within an 8-month period to over $1,5000 a month.

Travel

Cost of flying by small plane to all schools since August 2006 has increased 25%

Freight

Cost per pound over the last 12 months has increased 25%

NOTE:

All of the above mentioned increases are based on the cost of a barrel of oil in August 2006 of $55.00. Current price of one barrel of oil is $95.00 and could top $100.00 by March 2008. This is a 73% per barrel increase for oil. What will our increase cost in all areas be for April 2008 to May 2009?

IASD Crisis

The school district projects it will need to spend $300,000 into its reserve by July 2008. During the 2008-2009 school year IASD is projecting to spend over $600,000 into its reserve. If this happens the reserve will be gone and the financial challenges will still exist.

Action Steps Being Considered by the IASD School Board

1. Cut staffing positions for the August 2008 – May 2009 school year. This will save $375,000.
2. Evaluate all buildings and determine cost effective operations. Consider renting building or reducing the size of buildings if possible to save on energy use. Extreme option would involve moving children from the existing buildings into other buildings in the community.
3. Examine energy long-range projects, water wells, solar power, and other ways to reduce energy cost at all schools.
4. Seek other suppliers for oil and find a lower price per gallon.
5. Limit repairs on buildings to only that which is absolutely necessary for the continued operation of the structure.
6. Travel to communities that currently have 15 or less students enrolled and hold community meetings to communicate the crisis with all involved.
7. If the decline in enrollment continues staff cuts will have to be considered by the board in January 2009.
8. Examine ways to deliver the education our students need through technology.
9. Compile all suggestions from every community and take immediate action to help resolve the issues as best we can.
10. These steps will not meet the total financial needs for the next school year. We will still spend at least $300,000 above our 2008-2009 budget.

If you have suggestions that will help please share them with school staff, board members, or the superintendents office.

THE LAKE AND PENINSULA SCHOOL DISTRICT

101 Jensen Drive
P.O. Box 498
King Salmon, Alaska 99613
Phone (907) 246-4280/Fax (907) 246-4473

RESOLUTION 08-01

A RESOLUTION OF THE LAKE AND PENINSULA SCHOOL BOARD SUPPORTING THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

WHEREAS, The Joint Legislative Education Funding Task Force met regularly over the summer; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force accepted public testimony, and openly discussed and debated the merits of various changes to the education funding formula; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force prepared a Report to the Legislature and the Governor with stated recommendations; and

WHEREAS, the implementation of the Task Force Recommendations will improve public education in Alaska and provide school districts with a more equitable and stable funding mechanism; and

WHEREAS, the implementation of the Task Force Recommendations will directly benefit students in the Lake and Peninsula School District;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Lake and Peninsula School District Board of Education supports the Task Force Recommendations; and specifically finds the following recommendations of high importance:

- The passing by the Legislature of SB 125 (PERS/TRS cost sharing) in substantially the same form as it currently exists;
- The creation of standing Education Committees in the House and Senate to oversee and review all education issues in the state;
- The referral to the Education Committee of the various long-term issues discussed in the Task Force report;
- The implementation of the ISER district cost factor, phased in to statute over time as set out in the Task Force recommendations;
- The phased in increases in intensive needs funding with those increases set into statute;
- The recalibration of the transportation reimbursement rate based on the most recent actual audited costs; and
- An increasing Base Student Allocation amount set in statute for fiscal years 2009, 2010 and 2011, at an amount that will keep pace with projected cost increases over those years.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Lake and Peninsula School District Board of Education specifically recommends that the Legislature adopt the Joint Legislative Education Funding Task Force recommendations within the first thirty (30) days of the legislative session.

PASSED AND ADOPTED BY A DULY CONSTITUTED QUORUM OF THE LAKE AND PENINSULA SCHOOL BOARD THIS 30TH DAY OF JANUARY, 2008.

George Hornberger, Board President

Board Clerk

THE LAKE AND PENINSULA SCHOOL DISTRICT

101 Jensen Drive
P.O. Box 498
King Salmon, Alaska 99613
Phone (907) 246-4280/Fax (907) 246-4473

RESOLUTION 08-02

A RESOLUTION OF THE LAKE AND PENINSULA SCHOOL BOARD CONCERNING ENERGY RELIEF FOR RISING FUEL AND ELECTRICITY PRICES

WHEREAS, the Governor and the Joint Legislative Education Funding Task Force generously strived to create a much needed benefit to education, and

WHEREAS, the communities of Lake and Peninsula express their appreciation for the Governor and the Joint Legislative Education Funding Task Force's recommendations to improve education funding; and

WHEREAS, the Lake and Peninsula Borough School District is forced to reallocate critical instructional resources to pay for rapidly escalating energy costs; and

WHEREAS, the Lake and Peninsula Borough School District anticipates an FY 2009 energy increase of 25% over the FY 2008 needs; and

WHEREAS, goods and services affected by fuel increases, such as freight and student activities travel, are reducing the buying power of education funds; and

WHEREAS, every dollar spent on increased energy costs is a dollar taken from student instruction; and

WHEREAS, the increased fuel prices threaten the visible benefits of the Governor and the Joint Legislative Education Funding Task Force's recommendations, and

WHEREAS, the same increased fuel prices provide the State of Alaska with increased revenue,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Lake and Peninsula Borough School District Board of Education requests a supplemental relief appropriation for FY 2009 from the Governor and the Alaska Legislature to mitigate the increased energy costs.

PASSED AND ADOPTED BY A DULY CONSTITUTED QUORUM OF THE LAKE AND PENINSULA SCHOOL BOARD THIS 30TH DAY OF JANUARY, 2008.

George Hornberger, Board President

Board Clerk

Leading the Way

Northwest Arctic Borough School District

"Educating Our Children to Lead Successful Lives"

P.O. Box 51 • Kotzebue, Alaska, 99752 • Phone (907) 442-3472 • Fax (907) 442-2392

RESOLUTION 08-002

A RESOLUTION OF THE NORTHWEST ARCTIC BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT TO REQUEST A RELIEF APPROPRIATION FOR FY-09 FROM THE GOVERNOR AND THE ALASKA LEGISLATURE TO MITIGATE THE INCREASED ENERGY COST.

WHEREAS, The Governor and the Joint Legislative Education Funding Task Force generously strived to create a much needed benefit to education; and

WHEREAS, the communities of Northwest Arctic Borough express their appreciation for the Governor and the Joint Legislative Education Funding Task Forces recommendations to improve education funding; and

WHEREAS, the Northwest Arctic Borough School District is struggling to balance energy costs while being forced to cut instructional cost due to unanticipated in fuel since FY-07; and

WHEREAS, the Northwest Arctic Borough School District anticipates a FY-09 energy increase of 25%, which will be $1 million; and

WHEREAS, all goods and services purchased by the Northwest Arctic Borough School District are affected by fuel increases and are diminishing the buying power of education funds; and

WHEREAS, every dollar spent on increased energy costs is a dollar taken from student instruction; and

WHEREAS, the increased fuel costs threaten the visible benefits of the Governor and the Joint Legislative Education Funding Task Force's recommendations; and

WHEREAS, the same increased fuel costs provide the State of Alaska with increased revenue;

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Northwest Arctic Borough School District Board of Education requests a relief appropriation for FY-09 from the Governor and the Alaska Legislature to mitigate the increased energy cost.

ADOPTED, February 26, 2008 at a regular meeting of the Northwest Arctic Borough School District Board of Education at which a quorum was present and voting.

ATTEST:

Sandy Shroyer Beaver
Sandy Shroyer Beaver,
President, NWABSD Board of Education

for Robert T. Wells
Patricia Thomas,
Secretary, NWABSD Board of Education

Serving the Villages of
Ambler • Buckland • Deering • Kiana • Kivalina • Kobuk • Kotzebue • Noatak • Noorvik • Selawik • Shungnak

Kodiak Island Borough School District

Resolution #078-002

Fuel and Electricity

WHEREAS, the Governor and the Joint Legislative Education Funding Task Force generously strived to create a much needed benefit to education; and

WHEREAS, the communities of Kodiak Island express their appreciation for the governor and the Joint Legislative Education Funding Task Force's recommendations to improve education funding; and

WHEREAS, the Kodiak Island Borough School District is struggling to balance energy costs while being forced to cut instructional costs due to unanticipated increases in fuel since FY2007; and

WHEREAS, the fuel cost increases raised fuel oil heating cost for the Kodiak Island Borough School District thirty-three percent; and

WHEREAS, the cost of electricity increases from raises in the Cost of Power Adjustment (COPA) to thirty-seven percent; and

WHEREAS, the Kodiak Island Borough School District anticipates an FY 2009 energy increase of $600,000 over the FY 2008 needs; and

WHEREAS, goods and services affected by fuel increases, such as freight and student activities travel, are diminishing the buying power of education funds; and

WHEREAS, every dollar spent on increased energy costs is a dollar taken from student instruction; and

WHEREAS, the increased fuel costs threaten the visible benefits of the Governor and the Joint Legislative Education Funding Task Force's recommendations, and

WHEREAS, the same increased fuel costs provide the State of Alaska with increased revenue,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Kodiak Island Borough School District Board of Education requests a relief appropriation for FY 2009 from the Governor and the Alaska Legislature to mitigate the increased energy.

Adopted this 28th day of January 2008.

Elizabeth Odell

Elizabeth Odell, President
Kodiak Island Borough School District
Board of Education

Alaska State Legislature

Interim:
112 Mill Bay Road
Kodiak, AK 99615
Phone: (907) 269-8872
Fax: (907) 269-5264

Session:
State Capitol, Room 412
Juneau, AK 99801-1182
Phone: (907) 465-2487
Fax: (907) 465-4956

Representative Gabrielle LeDoux
District 36

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 20, 2008 **CONTACT**: Rep. Gabrielle LeDoux, 465-2487

LeDoux Introduces Energy Subsidy for Public Schools

HB 386 Would Reimburse 50 Percent of Energy Costs

(Juneau) – A bill recently introduced by Rep. Gabrielle LeDoux, R-Kodiak, would provide a 50 percent energy subsidy for public schools. HB 386 would authorize a subsidy to be paid in addition to the state funding provided under the K-12 school foundation formula. For the purposes of an initial program, the subsidy would be limited to the fiscal years 2007-2009.

"Our public schools throughout the state are hurting from the high cost of energy – heating fuel, in particular – and the State of Alaska needs to step in and help out with these costs," LeDoux said. "The education funding task force provided excellent direction to the Legislature in how to address the disparity in funding across districts, but every one of those districts has an energy crisis they have to contend with right now. This subsidy is the most direct way we can mitigate that crisis."

HB 386 was introduced on Tuesday, February 20, and referred to the Health, Education and Social Services Committee, and the Finance Committee.

# # #

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to do
on this

Rep. LeDoux pushes bill to reduce energy costs to schools

Article published on Friday, Feb 22nd, 2008

By MISTY MAYNARD
Mirror Writer

A bill recently introduced by state Rep. Gabrielle LeDoux would provide a much-needed energy subsidy for public schools.

Under the bill, schools would be reimbursed for 50 percent of energy costs.

"Our public schools throughout the state are hurting from the high cost of energy — heating fuel in particular — and the State of Alaska needs to step in and help out with these costs," Gabrielle LeDoux said.

Gabrielle LeDoux said the education funding task force provided direction to the Legislature in how to address the disparity in funding across districts. However, every district has an energy crisis to contend with now.

"This subsidy is the most direct way we can mitigate that crisis," she said.

Superintendent Larry LeDoux said the Kodiak Island Borough School District faces a $700,000 increase in energy costs for next year.

"It's a significant, significant increase," he said.

That estimate includes electricity, heating and fuel increases.

The district is cutting $500,000 from its budget after an increased to the base student allocation fell short of expectations.

Currently, the district receives $5,380 per student. An education task force recommended a $100 increase to the base student allocation. Gov. Sarah Palin then recommended that increase be $200 per student, the number used by the borough in the development of next year's budget.

It appears the $200 increase will not be approved, and the borough has had to revamp the budget based on the $100 increase. The difference is $500,000.

Larry LeDoux hopes the $200 increase could still be approved.

Any additional funding assistance from the state would be appreciated, Larry LeDoux said.

"We're ready to receive any help we can," he said.

The proposed bill would authorize a subsidy in addition to the state funding provided under the K-12 school foundation formula. For the purpose of an initial program, the subsidy would be limited to fiscal years 2007-2009.

The bill was introduced Tuesday and referred to the Health, Education and Social Services Committee, and the Finance Committee.

Mirror writer Misty Maynard can be reached via e-mail at mmaynard@kodiakdailymirror.com.

LOWER YUKON SCHOOL DISTRICT

P.O. Box 32089 • Mountain Village, Alaska 99632
Phone (907) 591-2411 Fax (907) 591-2419

George Smith
Chairman

John Lamont
Superintendent

Resolution 2007-08

Energy Relief

WHEREAS, the Governor and the Joint Legislative Education Funding Task Force generously strived to create a much needed benefit to education; and

WHEREAS, the communities within the Lower Yukon School District express their appreciation for the Governor and the Joint Legislative Education Funding Task Force recommendations to address education funding; and

WHEREAS, the Lower Yukon School District is forced to reallocate critical instructional resources to pay rapidly escalating energy costs; and

WHEREAS, the Lower Yukon School District anticipates an FY 2008 energy increase of 1.2 million dollars over FY 2008 needs; and

WHEREAS, goods and services affected by fuel increases such as air travel and freight across the bay are reducing the buying power of education funds; and

WHEREAS, every dollar spent on increased energy costs is a dollar taken from student instruction; and

WHEREAS, the increased fuel prices threaten the visible benefits of the Governor and the Joint Legislative Education Funding Task Force recommendations; and

WHEREAS, the unanticipated fuel prices present challenges to the State of Alaska and the Lower Yukon School District;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Lower Yukon School District Board of Education requests a supplemental relief appropriation for FY 2008 from the Governor and the Alaska Legislature to mitigate the increased energy costs.

Adopted this 4th day of March 2008

George Smith, Chairman
Lower Yukon School District
Board of Education

LOWER YUKON SCHOOL DISTRICT

P.O. Box 32089 • Mountain Village, Alaska 99632
Phone (907) 591-2411 Fax (907) 591-2412

George Smith
Chairman

John Lamont
Superintendent

Resolution #04-08

Construction Cost Relief

WHEREAS, in [illegible] the State Legislature appropriated [illegible] for the Russian Mission School to the Lower Yukon School District; and

WHEREAS, the funding was based on 2006 construction costs; and

WHEREAS, the funding was pre-dated for FY 2008; and

WHEREAS, the Lower Yukon School District went out to bid for the new Russian Mission School in January 2008; and

WHEREAS, all bids came in at 20% over the anticipated construction cost; and

WHEREAS, the Lower Yukon School District does not have the additional Capital funds available to accomplish this project at the bid construction prices; and

WHEREAS, the need for a new school in Russian Mission is very important to the learning of the children in Russian Mission; and

WHEREAS, the price of crude is around $100.00 barrel and the State of Alaska has sufficient funds to adjust construction costs that were fixed two years ago; and

WHEREAS, said construction cost was determined by an [illegible] and cost our District more to build a new school at Russian Mission;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Lower Yukon School District Board of Education requests a construction cost relief appropriation for FY 2008 from the Governor and the Alaska Legislature to mitigate the increased construction costs for the new Russian Mission School.

Adopted this 4th day of March 2008

George Smith, Chairman
Lower Yukon School District
Board of Education

LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH REPORT

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HEATING AND ELECTRICAL COSTS FOR ALASKA SCHOOL DISTRICTS

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You asked about costs for heat and electricity for rural school districts, and for a comparison with districts in Anchorage and Fairbanks. For the purposes of this report, we asked school districts in Alaska to submit information on heating and electrical costs for the last two school years, and the anticipated costs for the current year.[1] We also asked for historical information on energy costs, if it was available. We compiled responses from about 90 percent of Alaska school districts. Table 1 shows utility expenditures for a sample of rural districts and Regional Education Attendance Areas, and school districts in Anchorage and Fairbanks, for the last three school years (2004-2006).

[1] We contacted all 53 districts and Mt. Edgecumbe High School. We received useable responses from 47 districts: Alaska Gateway, Aleutians East, Anchorage, Annette Island, Bering Strait, Bristol Bay, Chugach, Copper River, Cordova, Craig, Delta/Greely, Denali Borough, Dillingham, Fairbanks, Galena, Haines, Hoonah, Hydaburg, Iditarod, Juneau, Kake, Kenai Peninsula, Klawock, Kodiak, Kuspuk, Lake and Peninsula, Lower Kuskokwim, Lower Yukon, Mat-Su, Nenana, North Slope Borough, Northwest Arctic, Pelican, Petersburg, St. Mary's, Sitka, Skagway, Southeast Island, Southwest Region, Tanana, Unalaska, Valdez, Wrangell, Yakutat, Yukon Flats, Yukon/Koyukuk, and Yupiit. Five districts and Mt. Edgecumbe High School did not respond, including Aleutian Region, Chatham, Kashunamiut, Ketchikan, and Nome. Pribilof district officials provided information that we were unable to use (individual prices per kilowatt hour and per gallon, rather than total expenses).

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Table 1: Energy Expenditures for Selected Alaska School Districts, 2004-2006

District Names	2003-2004		2004-2005		2005-2006*	
	Total	% Change from Previous	Total	% Change from Previous	Total	% Change from Previous
Anchorage	$9,140,384	--	$9,578,690	5%	$10,934,658	14%
Craig	$154,443	--	$167,563	8%	$266,828	59%
Fairbanks	$3,147,062	7%	$3,676,545	17%	$4,959,264	35%
Hydaburg	$113,312	--	$182,316	61%	$364,642	100%
Kuspuk	$269,014	--	$270,493	1%	$351,641	30%
Lower Yukon	$2,182,134	5%	$2,071,796	(5%)	$2,463,800	19%
Northwest Arctic	$2,745,457	9%	$2,787,217	2%	$3,182,800	14%
Saint Mary's	$135,300	--	$142,800	6%	$178,600	25%
Unalaska	$357,913	--	$448,221	25%	$550,000	23%
Yukon Flats	$606,592	22%	$635,253	5%	$730,540	15%
Yukon/Koyukuk	$534,453	(17%)	$624,472	17%	$664,952	6%
Yupiit	$474,920	--	$528,837	11%	$780,000	47%

Notes: An "--" indicates that the district provided no information for the 2002-2003 school year. * 2005-2006 figures are anticipated or budgeted costs.

Sources: Alaska School Districts

As you can see from Table 1, district expenditures for fuel and electricity vary considerably, even in rural areas—from an expected increase in 2006 of 100 percent in the rural Southeast community of Hydaburg (a district of only about 70 students on Prince of Wales Island) to only six percent in the Yukon/Koyukuk district, which serves small communities along the Yukon River.

We present information from all the districts that responded to our request in the following tables, included as Attachment A:

- *Table 2: Electricity and Fuel Costs by District, 2004-2006;*
- *Table 3: Increases in Energy Costs, 2004-2006--Comparison of Selected Rural Districts, Urban Districts, and Regional Education Attendance Areas;*
- *Table 4: Anticipated Increases in Energy Costs for the 2005-2006 School Year--Comparison of Selected Rural Districts, Urban Districts, and Regional Education Attendance Areas.*

Several of the districts we contacted mentioned the impact of warmer or colder winters, and doubted we could arrive at any meaningful conclusions unless we took temperatures into consideration. It is clear, however, that most districts are experiencing significant increases in utility costs. For example, according to Table 3:

- Regional Education Attendance Areas (REAAs) have seen increases in costs ranging from *13 percent in Lower Yukon to 64 percent in the Yupiit district* since the 2003-2004 school year (an average of *21 percent*);

- Rural school districts' costs have risen from *5 percent in Bristol Bay to over 200 percent in Hydaburg* during the same period of time (an average of *30 percent*);

- Expenses for heat and electricity in the five largest urban districts in the state (Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau, Kenai, and Kodiak) rose from *20 percent (Anchorage) to 58 percent (Fairbanks)* since the fall of 2003 (an average of *22 percent*).

Districts also anticipate substantial increases in energy expenditures for the current school year.[2] We compared rural and urban districts and REAAs based on increases between 2005 and 2006. According to Table 4,

- Increases in rural districts range from *2 percent in the Bristol Bay Borough* to *100 percent in Hydaburg* (an average of *58 percent*);

- Regional Education Attendance Areas expect increases this year of about *4 percent in Iditarod* to *47 percent in the Yupiit district* (an average of *27 percent*);

- Urban districts anticipate increases this year ranging from *8 percent in Kodiak* to *35 percent in Fairbanks* (an average of *37 percent*).

Some districts opened new schools in the last year or two, which contributed to increased utility costs. Several districts mentioned that they had closed buildings or portions of buildings, performed upgrades of heating systems, and made other modifications in order to conserve energy and reduce costs. The following districts mentioned specific changes (in addition to rate changes) that increased or decreased energy costs in the past few years:

- In 2004-2005, the **Anchorage School District** opened the South Anchorage High School and closed the Village Charter School. This year, the district opened the new Eagle River High School.

- Major renovations to one school in the **Denali Borough** resulted in slightly lower costs in 2003.

- **Dillingham School District** expects significant increases in 2005-2006 in part due to changes in the waste heat system that requires the district to now operate boilers to provide heat.

- In FY04, the **Kake School District** purchased a stand-by generator, which allows them to qualify for a lower "interruptible" electrical rate.

- The **Kuspuk School District** combined the middle and high schools, and shut off the utilities to about 90 percent of the middle school building in order to reduce costs.

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[2] We include a copy of a recent article published in the *Juneau Empire* "Skyrocketing Oil Costs Put Squeeze on School Budgets," as Attachment B.

- In **Pelican**, the school district closed two buildings in 2003 and a third building last summer. The district uses one of the buildings for storage, with minimal heat; the other two buildings are not heated, which has caused some deterioration.

- Officials with the **Pribilof School District** said they were unable to provide much current information, as the contractor in charge of a major renovation of the school in St. George last year paid the utilities during the nine-month construction period. In St. Paul contractors are currently revamping the heat plant, including installing new boilers and renovating the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system.

- The **Yukon/Koyukuk School District** closed sites in Bettles and Wiseman, but utility expenses are so high that this closure did not significantly impact costs.

- When the **Yupiit School District** opened a new school last year in Tuluksak they switched from generating their own power to buying power from the village.

Officials in many districts indicated their concerns about rising energy costs and the impact on their districts and programs, and expressed their appreciation that someone was examining the issue.[3]

I hope you find this information to be useful. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have questions or need additional information.

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[3] As you know, school boards are not the only ones worrying about growing energy costs. Communities across the state are concerned about increasing costs for electricity and heating fuel, as well. In response, Governor Murkowski is considering increases for state-funded energy programs for this year and next year in order to help rural communities, including increases for the Power Cost Equalization program, and for the Small Municipality Energy Assistance and the Low Income Home Energy Assistance programs. "Murkowski: Funds to Heat Villages at the Top of His List," *Juneau Empire*, October 21, 2005 (included as Attachment C).

LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A

Table 2: Electricity and Fuel Costs by District, 2004-2006
Table 3: Increases in Energy Costs, 2004-2006--Comparison of Selected Rural Districts, Urban Districts, and Regional Education Attendance Areas
Table 4: Anticipated Increases in Energy Costs for the 2005-2006 School Year--Comparison of Selected Rural Districts, Urban Districts, and Regional Education Attendance Areas.

Attachment B

"Skyrocketing Oil Costs Put Squeeze on School Budgets," *Juneau Empire*, October 21, 2005

Attachment C

"Murkowski: Funds to Heat Villages at the Top of His List," *Juneau Empire*, October 21, 2005