

Indian Education Act Proposal Is Drawn Up

Representatives of Indian Education Act regional parent advisory committees and regional IEA field coordinators met for three and a half days last week at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks to draw up a proposal for rural education.

The \$1.3 million proposal to be submitted to the U.S. Office of Indian Education represents a request for federal funds for the Alaska State-Operated School System under Title IV, Part A of the Indian Education Act.

The purpose of the Title IV program is to "provide financial assistance to local educational agencies to develop and implement supplementary educational designed to meet the special educational needs of Indian students."

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According to Nettie Peratrovich, director of the Title IV program for the State of Alaska, the intent of the IEA is

parental involvement in developing school programs. Parents and teachers meet to decide the needs of each school.

In order to be eligible for federal assistance, the school programs must take into account the culture, heritage and lifestyle of the local community.

According to federal guidelines, the State of Alaska is only eligible to receive \$650,000 under the IEA, Peratrovich said. However, the state actually received approximately \$1.1 million in federal funds for 1975. She said the 1976 proposal has been increased by 20 per cent simply to maintain educational programs at their current level.

Peratrovich did not speculate on whether the federal government would meet the state's request but she said, "I sure hope they do because we sure as hell have a lot of poor schools. We have schools without doors, without toilets. Many schools are just shacks. The Indian Education Act can provide for this type of thing."

Federal funds are also used to purchase athletic equipment, books and other instructional materials for Native cultural programs, and materials for shelves and other improvements.

Peratrovich said that since the Title IV program was implemented, there has been increased participation by parents in planning for the needs of their local schools.

"We know the Title IV program is filling a need because the momentum from last year is carrying through this year and next," she said.