

Flood Threat Chases Students Home Early

Village youngsters enrolled in Fairbanks High School are on a vacation to end all vacations. They were evacuated last week-end on notice schools would close due to flooding.

This proved to be a false alarm but by the time authorities realized their mistake, it was too late. Almost 100 students had been flown home and it would cost too much to bring them back.

"They're probably out there having the time of their lives, muskrat trapping and whale hunting," speculates Mrs. Betty Magnuson who coordinates the boarding-home program for the State Department of Education.

"We've had our evacuation

plan set for a month. What was supposed to trigger it was a notice the schools would close. The first plane load went out at 5:30 p. m. Friday and then shifts seven, eight and 10 Saturday morning. By the time we heard school was going to open again, it was too late.

"The youngsters were told if they wanted to stay they could, but who'd want to! Only about 30 of them are still here," she added.

It would cost about \$10,000 to get everybody back and authorities figure that price is too steep for the two weeks of school remaining. Grades have been kept up to date in anticipa-

(Continued on page 6)

Excuse from School . . .

(Continued from page 1)

tion of a possible closing and if the entire student body had quit, they'd simply use the marks as they stand.

Now, however, it looks like final exams may be distributed to bush areas to be given by local teachers.

In some respects, it may be a good thing the youngsters have gone home, Mrs. Magnuson decided.

"They were in a state of nerves anyway. The Anchorage pa-

pers have built this flood thing up and the papers went out into the bush. Parents were beginning to worry."

For better or worse, she's sure of one thing. That evacuation plan really was efficient

"I've never had anything work so beautifully," she marvels. "Nobody had to stay overnight. The planes showed up right on time and everybody was gone!"