

BEA forced into impasse in teacher negotiations

On April 7 the Barrow Education Association was forced into impasse in teacher negotiations by the North Slope Borough School Board. The items in dispute were salary, rent, housing security and contract duration.

The Barrow Education Association, as the elected bargaining agent for all teachers in the North Slope, requested a cost of living salary increase as guaranteed in the current negotiated agreement.

They also developed a subsidy housing plan which would have made rent more equitable with other rent in the community. Teachers on the North Slope have enjoyed subsidized housing for several years as a salary benefit.

Going into Wednesday night's session, the school board denied the teachers' right to maintain the current cost of living and instead offered far below the current agreement in such areas as salary, housing, work load and class size. Under the board's proposal a beginning teacher would receive \$2,853 less than

during the current year. And their proposal offered no increase for the second year.

The teachers' group offered several counter proposals to the board, even lowering their salary request. However, in spite of the BEA's continuing desire to negotiate, the school board refused to consider any of the teachers' many offers and declared impasse.

The board is now required by state law to request a representative of the United States Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service to act as mediator.

Following the declaration of impasse, John Anttonen, first-year superintendent of the North Slope Borough School District, left on a 10-day trip to San Francisco and Hawaii.