

Measure of Growth—

Baby Growth Chart

Part of the following story was printed in the AFN Page some weeks ago concerning the baby growth chart. Here is the second installment.

By GORDON JACKSON

These inequities stem from two main contrasts between local school districts and the State Operated School System.

First, local school districts augment State support with local taxes in varying degrees dependent on local circumstances, whereas there is no tax collection in the area served by ASOS.

Second, local school districts are permitted through state rules and regulations do have local policy-making authority; while schools in the State Operated System at the local level are permitted by law only advisory status in school operation. Policy-making in the ASOS is centralized in a single statewide board of directors appointed by the Governor.

The third element of the tripartite is the federal system of rural schools for Alaska Natives operated directly by the U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs. Policies for the BIA schools are determined by the executive and legislative branches of the federal government, representing yet a third and even more remote levels of control.

Three completely different administrative and policy-making arrangements must by their very nature be inherently unequal. These arrangements at the very least guarantee an inequitable distribution of financial resources, policy control, and educational opportunity, thus thwarting the intention of the constitution calling for State responsibility for education of all the children of Alaska.

In nearly all instances elsewhere in the United States the people of local school districts are permitted through legislative action to exercise local control by means of an elected school

board.

Because of their school boards only advisory, the residents of local communities with State Operated Schools or who are under the BIA system have no legal authority to determine the educational programs designed for their children.

Expressions of the need for reorganization of the State educational system in light of the recent explanation leading to the possibility of improved educational services are coming from many sectors of the Alaskan society. One of these factors is the Alaska Federation of Natives Human Resources Department. We feel that local control of schools will do more to develop our Human Resources than any other activity we are currently involved in.

For years, we as a statewide organization have been working for a fair and just settlement of our Native land claims. In 1971, we were finally successful. The AFN organization governed by a board of directors elected then began to deal with the many, many problems regarding the implementation of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act.

In 1973, the Alaska Federation of Natives board recognized that too much time was being spent on land claims matters.

The board, to make the organization more effective and responsive created the Human Resources Committee.

The committees first involvement was pre-higher education in the unorganized borough. During the 1973 annual convention of the AFN, a resolution was passed separating AFN into two separate departments and authorized the creation of a vice-president for Human Resources.

Also in December 1973, the AFN Human Resource Committee, Center for Northern Educational Research and the Legislature's Interim Committee on Higher Education completed over a year of work on pre-higher education in the unorganized borough.

(MORE IN TWO WEEKS)