



Integrity, Pride in Heritage, Progress

AFN, Inc.
1675 C STREET
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99501
PHONE (907) 274-3611

NEWSLETTER

Officers:

President — Roger Lang
Chairman of the Board — Jack Wick
Vice Chairman — Ted Angasan
Secretary — Carl Moses
Treasurer — Jim LaBelle

Vol. 3 No. 24

Wednesday, March 26, 1975

Anchorage, Alaska

EDUCATION: 'ONE DOWN AND THREE TO GO'

Toward Indians and Alaska Natives—

Anti-Discrimination Policy Statement Issued by DHEW

The Department of Health, Education and Welfare recently issued a policy statement to prevent discrimination against Indians and the Alaska Natives in health and medical services.

According to Carl Jack, Director, Health Affairs Division, AFN, Inc., the Secretary of DHEW, Casper W. Weinberger, issued a four-point procedure to ensure that Indians and Alaska Natives will not be deprived of their right to equal access to State, local and federal health-related services. The four points of the policy statement are:

1) Indians and Alaska Natives will have the same access as other citizens to receipt of medical services under a State plan

approved under any of the public assistance Titles of the Social Security Act, including Medicaid.

2) The eligibility of an Indian or other Native American, under the State's medical assistance plan or other public assistance plan, will not be affected by the use of services provided by Indian Health Service.

3) Under the approved assistance plan of the State, the State agency is responsible for meeting the cost to Native Americans to the same extent as provided other eligible individuals.

4) No recipient of federal financial assistance may refuse to certify as eligible or fail to provide health services to Indians or other

Native Americans, such as Alaska Natives, on grounds that Indian Health Services are available.

"The agreements signed on December 17, 1974, between the Office for Civil Rights, Indian Health Service, and Social Rehabilitation Services, should now be adhered to by changing the eligibility criteria under the General Relief Medical Program administered by the State of Alaska," said Mr. Jack.

"Otherwise, the State would be, as in the past, in direct violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits use of federal funds for programs which discriminate on the grounds of race, color, or national origin..."

Governor to Allow Milit. Reservation Schools in ASOSS

On Friday, March 14th, Governor Hammond signed into law a bill which authorizes the Commissioner of Education to require that schools on military reservations to come under the control of city or borough school districts.

The Alaska Federation of Natives, in its Education Position Paper last December, recommended that military schools should be removed from the Alaska State-Operated School System.

The Human Resources Department of AFN believes that the needs and issues of the rural ASOSS schools are very different from those of the military schools and that the two types of schools should be separated. The new bill will cause that to happen. One down, three to go!

There are three other bills pending in the legislature which address recommendations from the AFN Education Position Paper. SB 35, and its counterpart in the House, HB 24, both deal with public education in the unorganized borough.

If these bills are passed, the ASOSS would cease to exist on July 1, 1975 and would be replaced by regional education attendance areas, each with locally elected school boards.

The educational attendance areas would receive school funds based on the State foundation support program just as any city or borough school district does.

In addition, all school districts, including the new regional educational attendance areas, will be eligible to apply for funding from the bilingual/bicultural education fund administered by the Department of Education.

The bills would also allow the regional school boards to contract with the Bureau of Indian Affairs

for the operation of their schools.

SB 136 would create a local government commission. The commission would be responsible for studying and working in the unorganized borough concerning local government options. With a few amendments which AFN has provided, the bill could go a long way in providing technical assistance to local communities which wish to control their own education systems and to assume independent status.

In the House, HB 229 will provide funds for the Department of Education to study the public school foundation program. The study would bring the formula for foundation support up-to-date. Since the foundation program was created in the late 1960's, much has changed.

We need a new definition of "basic education" (which might include bilingual education) and a revised schedule for distribution of foundation monies to the various school districts in the State. The study would look at, and make appropriate revisions related to these concerns.

So, one down and three to go! The Alaska Federation of Natives' Human Resources Department has been working hard with the legislatures about these issues. The bills are important. Help by letting your Legislators know how you feel. We want to say "four down!"

AFN, Inc. President—

Testifies Before House Committee On Community and Regional Affairs

Roger Lang, President of the Alaska Federation of Natives, testified before the House Committee on Community and Regional Affairs on a bill to provide for State management of municipal trust lands.

The bill had been introduced at the request of AFN as a result of a provision in the Land Claims Act which provides that each Native Village Corporation must deed to the local municipal corporation a minimum of 1280 acres of land.

However, if there is no local municipal corporation (first class or second class city) then the land is deeded to the State in trust for the municipality if it should be formed in the future.

Presently, over half the villages in the State are not incorporated,

and therefore, the State would receive the land for those villages in trust.

There's no legislation authorizing the State to receive this land or providing for the management of the land once the State does receive it. The legislation which Roger Lang testified on will allow for the State to receive and manage the land in trust.

In his testimony in front of the Committee, which was chaired by Representative Sam Cotten (D-Anchorage), Roger Lang stressed several points. He said he felt that the State should have no role in identifying the 1280 acres to be conveyed.

This land should be selected by

the Native Village Corporation and then transferred to the State.

"The Land Claims Act does not provide for the municipal corporation or the State to select land," Mr. Lang told the Committee.

The Alaska Federation of Natives also took the position that no land should be transferred by the State by means of sale, lease, permit, easement, or right of way without concurrence at the village level.

AFN had originally suggested that this concurrence come either from the Native Village Corporation, the traditional council, a village meeting, or a village referendum.

Senator Joe Orsini (R-Anchorage) objected to the inclusion of Native Village Corporation as he felt it was not representative of a village as a whole if there were non-Natives living in the village.

However, AFN's position remains that some village entity, be it the traditional council, a village meeting, or some other means, would have to be used before the Commissioner of Community & Regional Affairs could transfer any lands.

As a result of the hearings, the State Department of Community and Regional Affairs Deputy Commissioner, Mike Harper, and the Department's Director of Community Planning, Kevin Waring, met with John Shively to do a rewrite on the legislation. A Committee Substitute has been drafted which seems to be

Pre-Planning a Conference—

Roger Lang on Trip To Amsterdam

Roger Lang left for Amsterdam on the 17th of March to attend a pre-planning conference for an International Circumpolar Conference which will be held next year.

Roger will be acting as a consultant along with Dr. Frank Darnell of the University of Alaska. The title of the Conference will be "A Delivery

System for Rural Education by the University of Alaska."

Roger feels that this will begin a trend for using Native input on a broader scale than has previously happened.

A more detailed report will follow on Roger's trip to Amsterdam and a side trip to Cambridge. He expects to return to Alaska the end of March.

ON-THE-JOB TRAINING.



Get paid for learning a job with us one weekend a month.

**THE ARMY RESERVE.
IT PAYS TO GO TO MEETINGS.**