

Thies pleaded no contest

The Associated Press

Former state Department of Education transportation officer Greg Thies has pleaded no contest to two counts of embezzling over \$40,000 from the state.

Thies entered his plea in Juneau Superior Court last week. He is to be sentenced Sept. 18, and could be ordered to serve up to 15 years in jail for each count and to make restitution.

Thies was indicted by a grand jury last year after an investigation revealed that while he was employed by the Department of Education in 1978 and 1979, Thies used state money to pay off some personal debts.

The grand jury probe found that state funds which were payments for school district bus contracts were deposited in a Juneau bank in a special account named "Anchorage Special Pro-

grams." District Attorney Patrick Gullufsen said the state's investigation revealed that 33 checks were written on the account, and that Thies used the money to pay debts and make land payments.

Although Thies pleaded no contest to the embezzlement charges, he is contesting the legality of the search of the bank records which form the basis of the case against him.