

Letters to the Editor

Elim, Alaska
November 27, 1968

Dear Sir:

Will you please print the following letter in the "Letters to the Editor" section of your newspaper?

When the regional high schools were proposed a few years ago, the biggest and practically the only argument of their creation was that the children would be home for the holidays, closer ties would be maintained and the bane of the boarding schools, homesickness, would be well on its way to being licked.

The advocates of the regional boarding schools pointed out that under the then existing system, the students left their homes in August and did not return home until the following May. They intimated if the regional schools were built all this would be changed.

Last year in December, we heard via the grapevine that there was to be no Christmas vacation. We hurriedly got up a petition signed by almost every adult in the village asking that the students be allowed to come home for a week.

We got a nice letter from the Beltz administration explaining that contracts had already been let for a certain number of teaching days, budget considerations prohibited it this year, etc. . . . BUT WAIT TILL NEXT YEAR. . . .

Last month our Elim representative on the Beltz Advisory School Board returned to the village with the news that again there was to be no Christmas vacation. We were again advised to wait until next year.

If our students are going to be kept in the boarding school for the full nine month term without a vacation they would be better off going to Chemawa, Mt. Edgecumbe, or Chilloco. At least they get the benefit of a little educational travel when they go to these distant schools.

We feel that with only a little planning on the part of the State educational system a way could be found to have our children with us over the holidays.

We know that most of the villages must feel as we do. . . Our children are only a few minutes (or at most a few hours) away from us and will not be allowed to come home. This is worse than having them at Chemawa where we know and understand it is impossible to have them home.

WE MISS OUR CHILDREN AND WE WANT THEM HOME FOR CHIRSTMAS.

Elim Advisory School Board

/s/ Fred Daniels
/s/ Marion Saccheus
Maggie Nagaruk
/s/ Andrew Nakarak
/s/ Harry Daniels
/s/ Henry Saccheus

Note: Maggie Nagaruk was out of the village when the board members signed the letter.