

# Tanana Chiefs Reconsidering Dorm

The Tanana Chiefs Conference Executive Committee and the Fairbanks Native Association Board of Directors today announced that their respective organizations are reconsidering their position to build the proposed Bureau of Indian Affairs dormitory in Fairbanks.

Tim Wallis, President of the Tanana Chiefs, indicated that his group "has serious reservations about having rural native children attend school in Fairbanks in light of the hostile attitude of the majority of the school board." Wallis said, "It

is evident to me that the events of these past few months are an indication of what is to happen in the future. We would rather **have the native children go to school in smaller communities.**

"Since Mr. Rees and his majority assumed control of the school board the school system has been front-page news and unfortunately, the only winner is Mr. Rees' ego and the losers are the school children," Wallis said.

Additionally, Wallis stated that the State's present implementation of smaller area high

schools has been the true goal of the Tanana Chiefs and the Fairbanks Native Association.

"We will enter into serious discussion with Morris Thompson, Area Director for the BIA, the Commissioner of Education, Marshall Lind, and the Superintendent of State-Operated Schools, Stanley Friese, to see if transferring the dormitory funds appropriated for Fairbanks to smaller communities would assist in developing area high

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schools," he said.

"If our discussions indicate that the funds would be better utilized for area high schools, we would then formally request the BIA to transfer the funds," Wallis continued. "We realize the need for regional high schools, but the need for area high schools, in our opinion, is greater. We believe," Wallis stated, "that area high schools should have been developed before the regional high schools in the first place."

Wallis said that the vote to pursue this course of action by

both the Executive Committee of the Tanana Chiefs and the Board of Directors of the Fairbanks Native Association was unanimous.

"This may seem to be a harsh course of action," he said, "however, it was not taken until after all the consequences were investigated.

"We are requesting Mr. Morris Thompson, Mr. Marshall Lind, and Mr. Stanley Frieze to meet with the Tanana Chiefs and the Fairbanks Native Association at the earliest possible date," he said.