

Native ed meeting

About 125 people attended the first annual meeting of the Alaska Native Education Association in Anchorage, March 3 and 4.

The new organization (ANEA), incorporated in mid-February, elected Dennis Demmert, director of Native Studies at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, as its first president. Elected for two-year terms on the Board of Directors were Patsy Aamodt of Barrow, Edward Thomas of Ketchikan, Jenny Alowa of Nome and Flore Lekanof of Anchorage. Elected for one-year terms on the board were Edna Lamebull of Anchorage, Gordon Jackson of Anchorage, Joseph Kahklen, Sr. of Angoon and Ava Walsh of Tanana. The board, meeting immediately after the conference, elected Flore Lekanof as vice-president, Edna Lamebull as secretary and Edward Thomas as treasurer.

Joseph Kahklen, Sr., the only school superintendent in Alaska who is Native, was keynote speaker for the conference. Kahklen emphasized the need for unity within the Native community if the needed changes in education are to be realized. Marshall Lind, state commissioner of Education, and June Nelson, newly appointed to the State Board of Education, also addressed the conference. Lind noted that the issues the new group planned to study were

PLEASE TURN TO PAGE TWELVE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

similar to the issues that the Department of Education is concerned about and attempting to address. Nelson expressed a desire to have various citizens inform her of their perceptions of educational issues that the Board of Education must address.

In a series of workshops, members of ANEA reviewed and discussed issues in the funding of federal programs, teacher certification, affirmative action, Natives in higher education, rural education, educational legislation, policies and practices of educational agencies in Alaska, educational needs assessments, bilingual education, and organization and development of ANEA.

"The reports from the workshops indicate that our members, working together, have a pretty good understanding of what the educational problems are in Alaska," said Demmert. "One of the first responsibilities of the new board will be to develop a focus on those issues which we can and should address," he stated.

Members showed special interest in bilingual education, educational needs assessment, teacher certification, affirmative action and implementation of the Tobeluk agreement. The Tobeluk agreement is a settlement of the "Hootch case," in which rural students sued the State of Alaska for high schools in rural communities. According to the agreement, the State Department of Education implemented new regulations which would ensure that more rural students have access to secondary educational services in or near their home towns.

A resolution was passed in support of expanding the Cross-cultural Educational Development Program (X-CED), which is a University of Alaska teacher education program with University professors working with students living and studying in rural communities. Resolutions were also passed in support of funding the capital move through bonds and funding school construction through appropriations from the state's general fund, and in support of a supplementary appropriation for training members of the rural school boards and school committees.

The new board plans to meet next in Juneau, tentatively in late March or early April.