

# Some ABC's

## in education

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If students from your community are traveling, are they getting the most from their travel experience? Do the educational programs in your school reinforce the value of those trips in academic instruction? Are the students prepared to understand the places they are visiting?

The school year and particularly the winter bring lots of miles of travel for Alaskan students. Visits for sports, music festivals, student council state-wide meetings, field trips, etc., send students all over the state and nation.

Using sports travel as an example, one can find many ways to enhance the athletic competition with other learning activities. Do your students know anything about the community they are visiting? Have the physical science classes discussed the geography, climate, and resources of the places the students will see? Have the social science programs prepared the students by reviewing the history of the communities the students will visit, emphasizing the traditional land uses, the contemporary economic situation, and current issues which affect that area?

Often times, there are idle hours spent waiting for the next plane or ferry. Could not that time be spent visiting a court room to watch the judicial system at work, visiting the airport manager to learn about airport operations, talking to airline personnel about vocational opportunities, etc.?

The ferry trips frequently produce long period of idle time; couldn't it be spent having the captain and his staff explain the operation of a ferry, the skills needed to keep the ferry system operative, and even a discussion of how the ferry system is subsidized by state and federal monies, or the economic impact on coastal and inland communities of the state?

During the intermissions of sporting events, could there be demonstrations and mini-competitions of Alaska Native games like the knuckle-hop, single- or two- foot high kick and other traditional games of skill which may appeal to the students who aren't interested in competing in the more typical athletic competitions?

Possibly visiting students could entertain their hosts in an all-school assembly as part of the visit for an athletic competition. Examples of their traditional food could be provided together with demonstrations of arts, crafts, dancing and singing. On a successive day, the host school could reciprocate, allowing students from both schools to better understand the cultures of the communities with whom they are competing.

There are many ways to extend the value of the travel dollar for students. A sound body can perform better if the mind is stimulated and active, too.