

Village Unhappy About State's Broken Promise

(Editor's Note: The following letter was written on May 23 to Governor Walter J. Hickel by the Teller City Council. Quite a number of people in Alaska believe the state school system is superior to that of the Bureau of Indian Affairs but the councilmen of Teller think otherwise.)

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Governor Walter Hickel May 23, 1967
Governors Office
State Capital
Juneau, Alaska

Dear Governor Hickel:

This winter we the Teller City Council agreed to give the State five acres of our land to build a good bigger school on for our kids. That school was approved over a year ago. It was supposed to be built this summer. Now the Department of Education says it won't get built till next year. Always excuses. Always delays. Promises. Promises. BIA school at Teller Mission is better. At Wales too and at Shishmaref see and Gambell. And those kids have hot lunch not dry milk always sour like the State. And the BIA teachers don't move all the time. Three teachers in fourteen years at Teller Mission. Here new teachers about every year always every two years.

We don't want to let the State have our five acres now. We want the State school to get out and let the BIA take over our school. It can't be no worse and it might be better. BIA Area Field Office is in Nome so is Plant Maintenance Office. They are closer to help our school better. Nobody comes around pays any attention to our school. State School Board members lives in Nome. Never checks up on our school. Nome has bum school too. School Advisory Board don't have any power. Education Department don't pay any attention. Right now we got good teachers. Two are leaving. May 2 new ones come no good like we had sometimes. Our dogs are smarter than some school teachers we had here. State School isn't good enough. Senator Blogett says so. We been thinking it it over he is right.

State get out right now. Go away. We write to Mr. Bennett, he is an Indian he knows we have problems. Maybe BIA can help us more like in other places. Thank you.

Very Truly,
Frank Topsekok, Vice-Pres.
Teller City Council

cc: Mr. Robert Bannett, Commissioner, BIA
Senator Bartlett
Senator Gruening
Tundra Times.