

Wrong assumptions made on rural education by reporters

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On January 21, Kristan Kelly and Wendy Hower of the *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner* published a week long series on Bush education.

Kelly and Hower traveled around this area and to other regions to research rural education.

There were many controversial issues brought up in the articles. The report assumed that even though Galena students had laptop computers, the technology didn't seem to work because a certain class had low cumulative scores on standardized tests. The only problem with this assumption was that it was only based on

one class and not the student body as a whole.

Also, the articles did not acknowledge the fact that educational changes don't immediately show up on standardized tests. While there have been positive changes in the district, these won't show up in national standardized tests right away.

On January 24th, Dennis McNeil from Manley wrote a letter to the editor of the *News-Miner*. His letter was written in a sarcastic tone which caught attention. He made a good point that there should also be articles on the violence and drugs in the urban schools.

Mr. Musser commented, "The article represents two peoples' limited observation of education in rural Alaska today."

Perhaps the personal references to Carl

Knudson were not in order. Kelly referred to him as a cowboy from Montana. She, however, didn't realize that a person's outer appearance does not reflect the job he does or how he does it. Mr. Knudson noted, "I feel some of the comparisons made were inappropriate and unfair in the context they were used. Our current effort to improve the students' educational programs in Galena will not be evident until future testing is done."

Kelly and Hower's final article of the series was published on Friday the 27th. Kelly brought up the issue of high standards in Galena. She accentuated the fact that Galena students have hours of homework and try to meet the high expectations set by the teachers. This was one of the highlights written about Galena. Kelly wrote how Mr. Lawhon's standards are very high, and the students strive to achieve the set goals.