

Edgecumbe funding passes hurdle

A bill to provide partial state funding to keep the Mount Edgecumbe BIA boarding school open passed the House State Affairs Committee last week and appears to be in for smooth sailing through the rest of the Legislature.

The bill, sponsored by State Rep. Al Adams, which calls for state funding of \$2.9 million to be contributed to the funding for the alternative high

school, is headed for consideration in the House Finance Committee, according to Gordon Jackson, an administrative assistant to Sen. Nels Anderson.

Jackson worked on the House Finance Committee on the Mount Edgecumbe matter until being transferred to work with Anderson. Anderson recently was appointed to re-

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Edgecumbe, other BIA schools hearings set

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place expelled Bethel senator George Holman.

Jackson said the bill should pass out of the finance committee this week and then will move to the House Rules Committee which schedules bills for consideration on the floor of the House. State Rep. Jack Fuller of Nome is in charge of the House Rules Committee and Jackson said he expects the bill to pass quickly to the floor of the House.

He also said he believes the bill will be supported by the House and has an equally good chance of approval by the state Senate.

The bill would provide state funding to match federal funding for the 30-year-old BIA boarding school. If the bill is passed and state funding is obtained for the school, non-Native students will be able to enter the school.

Hearings will be held in Sitka and Anchorage on March

30 and April 1 respectively on plans to transfer control of schools to state ownership.

According to area BIA spokesman Glen Robertson, the BIA has sent two proposals to Gov. Jay Hammond for transfer of the schools.

One proposal would have the federal government transfer 16 of the BIA day schools this year and the remaining 21 day schools and Mt. Edgecumbe the next year.

The other proposal would

have the federal government transfer all the BIA schools plus Mount Edgecumbe and give the state government about \$5.9 million which was left over from the operation of Mt. Edgecumbe and left over from teachers' salaries, said Robertson.

He said the proposals were submitted to Hammond last month by Interior Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs Ken Smith who asked for an answer by March 30.

According to Chuck Kleeshulte, a spokesman for Hammond, no answer has yet been written but one will be completed by the March 30 deadline. Kleeshulte said he doesn't know if an administration spokesman will testify at the hearings.

The March 30 Anchorage hearing will be held in the Federal Building. The April 1 Sitka hearing will be held in the Centennial Building. Both start at 10 a.m.