

## Keep speaking out on Mt. Edgecumbe

The results are beginning to pour in on how the people of Alaska feel about the plan to close Mt. Edgecumbe School which has for so long been part of the education lives of most Alaskan Natives.

Mt. Edgecumbe, the three-decade old Sitka institution, is scheduled to be closed after this school year, leaving many students now in the school without a place to continue their education.

Many of the students who now attend the Bureau of Indian Affairs-operated school have gone there because they either have no place in their village to attend or they feel the education offered at Mt. Edgecumbe is far superior to that offered at home.

Indeed, many of the graduates of Mt. Edgecumbe are now familiar names in the leadership of Alaska Natives.

From the comments coming from students, parents, village leaders, Sitka residents, and others, all seem to scream to keep the school open. Indeed, at the last two public meetings held to discuss the matter, few persons spoke in favor of closing the institution.

It would be easy, in the face of such overwhelming testimony to maintain the school, to state here and now that it should be kept open. It is hard to think of reasons for closing the school, what with the overwhelming testimony to the contrary.

But, all the votes are not in. The Alaska Federation of Natives which is leading the drive to assure that the public is truly heard on this matter, has held one public hearing and more are scheduled.

This is one of the many issues that Alaska Natives should involve themselves and make themselves known. If the people who want the school to remain open speak loudly enough, there is a good chance it will be so.

If the people who feel the school should close speak loudly enough, that too, may happen. But, no matter what side of the fence you are on, you should speak, write or communicate with your village council.

Mt. Edgecumbe is only one school but the sociological, educational, and economic impact the school has on thousands of people is immeasurable. Make yourself heard.

