Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education

Special Education Advisory Panel
Annual Report 2003-2004

Elizabeth Edmands, Chair of Council
Kris Johnston, Chair of Special Education Committee

Creating Change That Improves The Lives of People With Disabilities

June 30, 2004

Beth Edmands

Dear Commissioner and Friends of Education,

The Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) was established to advise the State regarding the education of all eligible children with disabilities. The activities, issues and recommendations of the SEAP for the 2003-04 academic year are enclosed in this report from the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education (The Council), which houses the SEAP.

The SEAP is composed of individuals who care about the services and supports available to children and families through Alaska's educational system. The students, parents and self advocates who serve on the SEAP bring their real life experiences to the table; regular and special educators, district administrators, related service providers and others provide expertise on how systems work and how to accomplish the tasks of the SEAP. Working together as a team makes the SEAP an asset in the planning and implementation of a comprehensive system of services and supports.

As the Council and its Education Committee gather around the state both in rural and urban settings, we meet with students and families to get a better understanding of strengths and issues in the provision of special education and related services. SEAP members are actively involved in the Continuous Improvement Focused Monitoring Process and look forward to the implementation of improvements that will move us closer to a quality education for all children.

Sincerely,

Beth Edmands, Council Chair

Kris Johnston, Education Committee Chair

Kris Johnston

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Appendix A: Organizational Chart

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Acronyms and Initials Used in this Report

AKSPED	Alaska Special Education Electronic Discussion Group (Listserv sponsored by the Council)
APR	Annual Performance Report
ASSEC	Alaska Statewide Special Education Conference
ATTI	Alaska Transition Training Initiative (transition from ILP to school)
AYP	Adequate Yearly Progress
CIFMP	Continuous Improvement Focused Monitoring Process
DOC	Department of Corrections
EED	Department of Education and Early Development
EI/ILP	Early Intervention/Infant Learning Program
EIC	Early Intervention Committee
FAPE	Free Appropriate Public Education
FBA	Functional Behavioral Assessment
FETA	From Emotions to Advocacy
GCDSE	Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education
HSGQE	High School Graduation Qualifying Examination
ICC	Interagency Coordinating Council for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities
IDEA	Individuals With Disabilities Education Act
IEP	Individualized Education Program
ILP	Infant Learning Program
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
NCLB	No Child Left Behind
OSEP	Office of Special Education Programs
PTI	Parent Training Information Center
SEA	State Education Agency (the Department of EED)
SEAP	Special Education Advisory Panel (known as State Advisory Panel in IDEA)
SESA	Special Education Service Agency
SIG	State Improvement Grant
WRRC	Western Regional Resource Center

Alaska spans a huge geographical area with a relatively small population. This is unique and requires a management system tailored to meet the needs of Alaskans. The Governor's Council on Disabilities & Special Education was created to meet Alaska's diverse needs. The Council uses planning, capacity building, systems change, and advocacy to create change for people with disabilities. Consistent with our State Plan we work towards systems change in areas including housing, employment, early intervention, special education, lifelong learning, independent living and inclusion in the community.

The Council provides a constructive process that connects the public with policymakers, to ensure the thoughtful development of an efficient and seamless service delivery system that meets the needs of individuals with disabilities across the life span. It is composed of 28 members appointed by the Governor. Appointments are made on a revolving basis by an application process. It serves a variety of federal and state roles, combining the expertise and experience of many stakeholders throughout the state into one unique Council:

State Council on Development Disabilities

Under the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act, the Council serves as the State Council on Developmental Disabilities; in Alaska the Council is also responsible for interdepartmental planning and coordination of services to persons with severe disabilities. The Council delegates the day-to-day work to the Developmental Disabilities Committee (DD).

Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC) for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities

Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Council serves as the Interagency Coordinating Council for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities, which advises and assists Alaska's statewide Early Intervention/Infant Learning Program (EI/ILP). The day-to-day functions of the ICC are delegated to the Early Intervention Committee (EIC).

Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP)
Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the Council also serves as Alaska's Special Education Advisory Panel which advises and assists Alaska's statewide Special Education program administered through the Department of Education & Early Development. The day-to-day functions of the SEAP are delegated to the Education Committee (EC).

Governing Body of the Special Education Service Agency (SESA)
Members of the Council act as the governing board for the Special Education Services Agency, which supports the effective education of students with low incidence disabilities throughout Alaska. For more information you can visit their website at: http://www.sesa.org/

The Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority
The Council reports on the status and needs of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families and makes recommendations for funding on their behalf. For more information you can visit their website at: http://www.mhtrust.org/

The Council membership is composed of individuals representing Alaska's geographic and ethnic diversity. A majority of the members are individuals with disabilities or parents of children with disabilities.

Parents of children with disabilities…….....Elizabeth Edmands, Kathy Fitzgerald, Kris Johnston, Donna Jordan, Nikki Kinne, Stacey Messerschmidt
Karen O'Neill, Rebecca Soverns, Gayla Valle

Individuals with disabilities…….....Anna Attla, Alan Cartwright, Taylor Gregg
Brian Knight, Joe Pichler, Arthur Walters

Teachers.....…….....Linda Bark, *GayLee Erickson, Gayla Valle

State and local education officials……...……...……..…Art Arnold, Darrell Sanborn

Special Education Program Administrator….*Theo Lexmond, *Chris Robinson, Alan Cartwright

State agencies involved in financing services to children with disabilities……...…..Robert Labbe

Institute of Higher Education……..…..Susan Ryan, Ph.D.

Students……..Brian Knight, Taylor Gregg

Early Childhood Transition Services……*Sharon Schumacher, *Bev Ingram

Secondary Transition Services…..……..……..…..David Quisenberry

Juvenile Justice and Adult Corrections agencies……..* Rose Munafo

Education & Early Development Liaison……*Dr. Shirley Holloway

Disability Law Center of Alaska……...……..…*Teresa Holt, *David Fleurant

Other representatives:……...……..……..……*Sanja Bolling, *Blanche Murphy

*These participants are appointed to a Council's standing committees, and are not appointed by the Governor

Purpose

The Special Education Advisory Panel is established (IDEA Regulations, 34 C.F.R. Part 300.652) in order to advise and assist the State with respect to special education and related services for children with disabilities, including advising the State on the education of eligible youth with disabilities who have been convicted as adults and incarcerated in adult prisons.

Meetings

The Council held three face-to face meetings in the 2003-04 academic year.

October 8-10, 2003- Talkeetna Alaskan Lodge, Talkeetna

January 20-23, 2004 – Centennial Hall, Juneau

May 7-9, 2004– Alyeska Prince Hotel, Girdwood

In addition, much of the work of the Special Education Advisory Panel is accomplished through the Education Committee, a standing committee of the Council that meets by teleconference on the second Tuesday of each month. Agendas and attachments are sent a week in advance. Approved minutes are posted on the Council's website http://www.hss.state.ak.us/gcdse/. During each Council meeting, a community forum is held so that local people can provide input on issues related to Early Intervention/Infant Learning Program, special education, disabilities or related concerns. In this school year, an additional public forum was held in Fairbanks, and people shared their experiences at the (Special Education Law and Advocacy) Training held in Juneau and Anchorage in April 2004.

Department of Education and Early Development reports & requests

A positive collaboration continued throughout this academic year between the Department of EED staff specializing in Special Education and the Council. All the staff in the Special Education Unit are involved in at least one way with Council activities. Example: The Section 619 (Preschool) Coordinator serves on the Council's Early Intervention Committee. The State Special Education Director is appointed by the Governor to be on the Council and attends the Education Committee meetings as time allows.

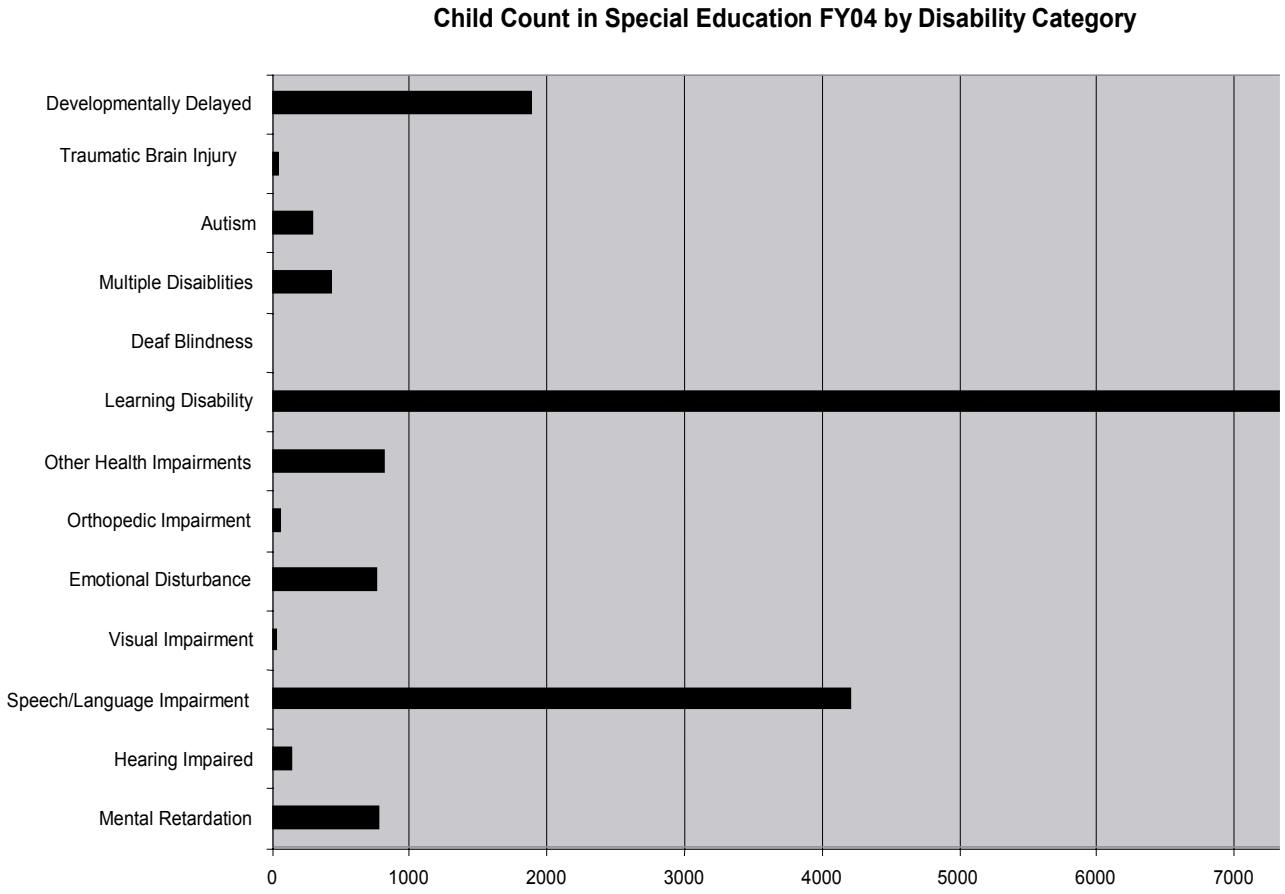
- ◊ Annual Performance Report (APR) for School Year 2002-03 submitted to the Office of Special Education Programs, US Department of Education, March 31, 2004
- ◊ Status of Monitoring Visits to Districts: Verbal Updates
- ◊ State Improvement Grant (SIG) updates
- ◊ Priorities for Improvement: A handout provided in April 2004 to the Education Committee

Requests made of the Council

Note: The Council responded favorably and collaboratively to these requests

- ◊ Planning and participation in the Continuous Improvement Focused Monitoring Process
- ◊ Student participation in Council processes
- ◊ Feedback on Optional Assessments
- ◊ Parent-friendly explanation of Exit Exam
- ◊ Collaboration on Web Site for Parent Information and Training
- ◊ Blending of Council priorities with EED's priorities, whenever possible
- ◊ Completion of a Parent-friendly section in the Special Education Handbook

Special Education Statistics



Disability Category (IDEA)	Number of Students
Mental Retardation	782
Hearing Impaired	158
Speech/Language Impairment	4221
Visual Impairment	44
Emotional Disturbance	767
Orthopedic Impairment	72
Other Health Impairments	831
Learning Disability	8382
Deaf Blindness	14
Multiple Disabilities	449
Autism	312
Traumatic Brain Injury	66
Developmentally Delayed	1900

Total number of students receiving special education = 17,998

As of 10/24/03 there were 17,998 students identified as eligible for Special Education services in Alaska's 55 districts (including Alyeska Central School of Correspondence). In addition statewide correspondence schools service hundreds of children with disabilities.

The Council notes that 70 percent of all students in Alaska who are receiving Special Education (12,603) are receiving services for a learning or speech/language issue.

The Education Committee completed much of its work plan. A few new resources were developed for the public to access including the AKSPED list serve, which 350+ people now subscribe to. The Welcome to Special Education in Alaska booklet was printed for distribution, and is also a new chapter in the State Department of EED's Special Education Handbook. More than sixty people receive a monthly Learning Opportunities for Alaskans email highlighting training opportunities around the state. Pam and Pete Wright conducted their two day "boot camp" drawing 100 people together in Juneau and 230 in Anchorage.

1. Fulfill Council's Role as Special Education Advisory Panel

◊ Recruited a student with a learning disability to serve on the Council

◊ Involved a group of Alaska Native people on a Native Advocacy workgroup to help us understand various perspectives on advocacy, managing conflict and communication in preparation for the Special Education Law and Advocacy training held in April 2004

◊ Identified a document with clarification on how the SEAP functions and the role of the State Special Education Director and shared that with all committee members

◊ Adopted procedures to guide input to State Board of Education

◊ Provided input on many of the proposed regulations considered by the State Board of EED including these:

- 4 AAC 06 - Adequate Yearly Progress determinations
- 4 AAC 06.775 – HSGQ ReExam
- 4 AAC 52.700(c) and (d) and 4 AAC 52.790(20) and (21) - Intensive Services for Students
- 4 AAC 06 - Statewide System of Assessments

◊ Developed a new section for the State's Special Education Handbook called "Welcome to Special Education in Alaska" and published it as stand-alone brochure

2. Parent Training – Empowerment and Support

◊ Brought Pete and Pam Wright to Juneau and Anchorage and trained 338 people on Special Education Law & Advocacy

◊ Developed linguistically appropriate materials for a presentation in Kodiak in Spanish and Tagalog.

◊ Planning to evaluate impact of parent training @ 6 months post training

◊ Presented on Secondary Transition at the Alaska Statewide Special Education Conference

◊ Moved forward on the SIG-based Web Development of a central parent training and information calendar and website

◊ Developed Alaska Special Education list serve that spans birth – 22

◊ Emailed out "Learning Opportunities" email monthly to help people access training and information

3. Improving Provision of Services in Alternative Placements

Did not complete any of the activities projected for this priority, but reshaped it for next year's workplan.

4. Out of State Placement

◊ Identified many issues in the "Bring the Kids Home" initiative related to Special Education. Specifics will be forwarded to the Mental Health Trust Authority .

◊ Linked with the Out of State Placement committee regarding many questions the EC has about percentage of children in out-of-state placements with IEPs, academic progress, transitions, implementation of IEPs and the development of a resource kit for schools and parents.

5. Inclusive Practices/ Natural Environment

◊ Established annual Inclusive Practice Award promoting inclusion in all school districts and Infant Learning Programs

◊ Created a booklet on successful inclusive practices in Alaska – the Alaska IDEA book

◊ Got update from new format of Child Care Teams that Anchorage School District uses

6. Secondary School Transition

◊ Assisted in dissemination of SIG toolkit at Special Education Director's Conference and at the Special Education Conference

7. Develop Capacity in Related Services

◊ Finalized and disseminated survey with school administrators, related service providers, professional organizations

◊ Supported partnerships with other personnel prep programs/states to train Alaskans (i.e. University partnering with Speech/Language Program)

8. SESA Reauthorization

◊ Supported SESA through advocacy process - forwarded this to Council's Legislative Committee for action

9. CIMP and Plan of Improvement ** collaborative with EIC**

◊ Participated as requested by EED and Office of Children's Services – including data validation meetings with OSEP

◊ Tracked follow up on recommendations on corrections, Part C to B transitions, parent survey on IEPs, training and dissemination of Set for Life

10. Monitor/Network/Advocate and follow up

◊ Implementation of recommendations on Department of Corrections and Department of EED collaboration

◊ School based Medicaid services

◊ Gather info on how other states are implementing fee-for-service Medicaid reimbursement

◊ Alaska Transition Training Initiative (ATTI) – received annual report

◊ Transition from Part C to Part B data

◊ IDEA Reauthorization

◊ Advocate for an alternate means for students with disabilities to show mastery of standards

◊ Participate in EED Alternate Assessment Committee –10/13-14/03

- Participate in EED Issues of Children w Disabilities Committee 11/7/03
- School Designators, Adequate Yearly Progress, NCLB Accountability Plan
- NCLB and IDEA updates via Art Cernosia teleconference
- Quality Schools II – received current information

Education Committee Priorities 2004-05 approved by Council May 2004

Kris Johnston, Chair-
Parent, Mental Health Worker

Art Arnold
State Special Education Director

Linda Bark
Rural Special Educator

Sanja Bolling
PARENTS, Inc.

Teresa Holt
Disability Law Center

Nikki Kinne
Parent, Head Start

Kathy Fitzgerald
University Center of Excellence in Disabilities

Taylor Gregg
Secondary Student

Theo Lexmond
Special Education Administrator

Irene Moreland
Parent, Mental Health Advisor

Rose Munafo
Department of Corrections

Chris Robinson
Special Education Service Agency

Darrell Sanborn
District Superintendent

Gayla Valle
Educator & Parent

1. CIFMP and Plan of Improvement

◊ Review consolidated CIFMP/Improvement Plan with Annual Performance Report for FY03-04 and provide feedback on Annual Performance Report content

◊ Move forward with EED and WRRC on using Focused Monitoring at school and district level

2. Parent and Student Training, Empowerment and Support

◊ Explore combining Hearing Officer training/parent training on IDEA

◊ Having a mini Wrights training at the annual Early Intervention conference

◊ Survey of parents on training needs and interests in FETA topics§ Reconvene Parent Training Collaborative

◊ Maintain AK Special Ed electronic discussion (AKSPED) – use it to communicate ideas about training

3. Capacity Building /Training for School Staff (incl parapros)

◊ ASSEC – assist in schools' needs for assistance building capacity at the local school level in the form of continuous training for teachers and paraprofessionals;

◊ Institute on specific topics (such as FBA, Transition) --

◊ Explore ASDN and ASSEC sponsoring topical institutes

4. Secondary Transition School and Transition activities

◊ Involve Alaska Transitions Outcome Project with committee work

◊ Involve more families in transition camp

◊ Review results of Division of Vocational Rehabilitation survey

◊ Promote and disseminate Secondary Education Transition Toolki

5. Special Education Students in Out of State Placements (Bring the Kids Home Initiative)

◊ Forward Education Committee interests in Bring the Kids Home specific to special education including: progress children make outside, data about conditions that require out of state placement, transitioning out of state and back in, monitoring of IEPs of students out of state

◊ Get information on interstate compact – responsibilities of state to transition students back with functional behavioral profile

6. Forward Recommendations to the SEAP

◊ Collaborate in the development of and respond to regulations

◊ Post Proposed Regulations Workgroup's procedures and principles on Council website§
HSGQE – Diploma issue and resolution of lawsuit

◊ Explore ways to provide public with due process hearing decisions
Items to track

◊ Charter Schools and Special Education - info from Art Arnold or Lou Ianotti on status of population of kids in charter schools - those with disabilities vs. those without disabilities

◊ HSGQE – Diploma issue and resolution of lawsuit

◊ SESA funding

◊ Recommendations on Corrections/Education collaboration

◊ Part C to B transitions

◊ Parent Survey on IEP's

◊ School-based Medicaid Implementation

◊ Issues around discipline, bullying

Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education—FY04

P.O. Box 240249 Anchorage, AK 99524-0249 Phone: 907-269-8990 FAX: 907-269-8995 Toll Free: 888-269-8990

Council roles

State Interagency Coordinating Council IDEA (Part C—Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities)

State Special Education Advisory Panel (Part B)

Governing Board of Special Education Service Agency

State Council on Developmental Disabilities

Make Recommendations to the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority

Executive Committee
Beth Edmands, Chair
Millie Ryan, Staff

Standing committees

Early Intervention Committee
Donna Jordan, Chair
Judith Bendersky, Staff

Education Committee
Kris Johnston, Chair
Judith Bendersky, Staff

Developmental Disabilities Committee
Alan Cartwright, Chair
Kathy Allely, Staff

Legislative Committee
Jodi Rumph, Chair
Kathy Allely, Staff
Jesseca Boyer, Intern

Budget Sub-committee

Creating Change That Improves the Lives of People With Disabilities

Appendix B: Council Membership July 1, 2004

Member	Address	Representing	Committee
Art Arnold (907) 465-2972 (w) (907) 465-2806 (f) art_arnold@eed.state.ak.us	Dept of EED Special Education 801 W 10th, Suite 200 Juneau, AK 99801	State Special Education Director SESA	Education Committee
Anna Attla (907) 339-9172 (h) (907) 264-6250 (w) (907) 274-4802 (f) marleneattla@hotmail.com	4151 E 20th, Apt 22 Anchorage, AK 99508	Self Advocate SESA People First Term Ends 6/30/05	Executive Committee DD Committee
Linda Bark n.a. n.a. lannbark@yahoo.com	Moving from Shaktoolik	Special Education Teacher Term Ends 6/30/04	Education Committee
Teresa Bunsen (907) 357-0489 (h) (907) 474-6444 (w) (907) 357-0411 (f) fftdb@uaf.edu	1830 E Parks Hwy PMB 337 Wasilla, AK 99711	Term Ends 6/30/06	Early Intervention Comm Education Committee
Katie Campbell (907) 465-4607 (w) katie_campbell@dced.state.ak.us	State Division of Insurance PO Box 110805 Juneau, AK 99811	Division of Insurance	
Alan Cartwright (907) 277-6677 (w) acartwright@arc-anchorage.org	The ARC of Anchorage 2211 ARCA Drive Anchorage, AK 99508	Self Advocate Term Ends 6/30/05	DD Committee Chair
Jennifer Dye (907) 235-2970 mjdye@xyz.net	PO Box 1559 Homer, AK 99603	Parent Term Ends 6/30/07	Early Intervention Comm
Elizabeth Edmands (907) 345-5070 (h) (907) 344-7222 (w) (907) 344-7349 (f) challenge.alaska@acsalaska.net	101 Pettis Road Anchorage, AK 99515 3350 Commercial Drive Suite 208 Anchorage, AK 99501	Parent Term Ends 6/30/06	Chair Executive Committee DD Committee

Member	Address	Representing	Committee
Kathy Fitzgerald (907) 264-6242 (w) (907) 274-4802 (f) (907) 345-3750 (h) anklf@uaa.alaska.edu	4521 Southpark Bluff Dr Anchorage, AK 99516	Parent UCEDD Representative Term Ends 6/30/05	Vice Chair Executive Committee Legislative Committee DD Committee
Taylor Gregg (907) 247-8463 (h) greggmary@yahoo.com	1225 S. Point Higgins Rd Ketchikan, AK 99901	Self Advocate Term Ends 6/30/06	Education Committee
Helen "Betsy" Grunch (907) 336-6165 (h) bswax@hotmail.com	9200 Independence Dr Apt 101 Anchorage, AK 99507	Term Ends 6/30/06	
Kris Johnston (907) 424-3145 (h) (907) 424-8268 (w) (907)424-8645 (f) kjohnston@cdvmc.com	PO Box 1729 Cordova, AK 99574 krisj@ctcak.net	Parent SESA Term Ends 6/30/06	Executive Committee Education Comm Chair DD Committee
Donna Jordan (907) 745-7092 (h) (907) 841-4348 (c) jordan5@mtaonline.net	HC 05 Box 6894 Palmer, AK 99645	Parent Mat-Su Services for Children & Adults Term Ends 6/30/06	Executive Committee Early Intervention Chair
Nikki Kinne (907) 479-2695 (h) nikinne@awcable.com	2175 Charlijo Loop Fairbanks, AK 99709	Parent Term Ends 6/30/04	Education Committee Early Intervention Comm
Bryan Knight (907) 563-4964 (h) (907) 522-9090 (w) (907) 644-8974 (f) (907) 350-2641 (c)	4271 Warwick Anchorage, AK 99507	Self Advocate Term Ends 6/30/04	Housing Subcommittee Chair DD Committee
Robert (Bob) Labbe (907) 465-3030 (w) bob_labbe@health.state.ak.us	Deputy Commissioner Health & Social Services PO Box 110601 Juneau, AK 99801		
Stacey Messerschmidt (907) 883-3944 (h) (907) 883-5815 (f) baron1@aptalaska.net	PO Box 997 Tok, AK 99780	Parent Term Ends 6/30/06	Early Intervention Comm

Appendix B: Council Membership July 1, 2004

Member	Address	Representing	Committee
Irene Moreland (907) 357-3532 (h) (907) 775-8417 (c) irenemorelandpa94@yahoo.com	1700 E Raven Drive Wasilla, AK 99654	Parent Term Ends 6/30/04	Legislative Committee Education Committee
Joe Pichler (907) 274-8108 (h) (907) 360-6817 (c) pichlerj@gci.net	3705 Williams St #B Anchorage, AK 99508	Self Advocate People First Term Ends 6/30/05	Legislative Committee
Jodi Rumph (907) 586-4216 (h) (907) 586-4216 (f) call first jodikrumph@netscape.net	6310 Glacier Hwy Juneau, AK 99801	Term Ends 6/30/04	Executive Committee Legislative Committee Chair
Darrell Sanborn (907) 581-3151 (w) (907) 581-3152 (f) call first dsanborn@ucsd.net	Superintendent Unalaska City School Dist. Box 570 Unalaska, AK 99685	Term Ends 6/30/04	Education Committee
Carla Shelton (907) 243-0883 (h) (907) 743-4280 (w) (907) 564-4955 (f) sheltoncm@gci.net	3580 W Dimond #C8 Anchorage, AK 99515 4171 E 20th Ave, Unit 10 Anchorage, AK 99508	Parent Term Ends 6/30/07	
Sarah Souders (907) 260-5690 (h) (907) 260-5690 (f) ssouders2002@yahoo.com	48094 Autumn Court Soldotna, AK 99669	Parent Term Ends 6/30/06	Early Intervention Comm
Arthur Walters (907) 224-5221 (h) (907) 362-1431 (c) alw36@ak.net	PO Box 276 Seward, AK 99664	Self Advocate SESA Term Ends 6/30/06	Legislative Committee DD Committee

Millie Ryan
Executive Director
Phone: (907) 269-8992
Fax: (907) 269-8995
E-mail: millie_ryan@health.state.ak.us

Judith Bendersky
Project Coordinator
Phone: (907) 269-8994
Fax: (907) 269-8995
E-mail: judith_bendersky@health.state.ak.us

Kathy Allely
Health and Social Services Planner
Phone: (907) 269-8991
Fax: (907) 269-8995
E-mail: kathy_allely@health.state.ak.us

Chris Hamilton
Research AnalystPhone
(907) 269-8554
Fax: (907) 267-8995
E-mail: chris_hamilton@health.state.ak.us

David Caldwell
Visual Information Specialist
Phone: (907) 269-3776
Fax: (907) 269-8995
E-mail: david_caldwell@health.state.ak.us

Darcy Mollett
Project Assistant
Phone: (907) 269-8462
Fax: (907) 267-8995
E-mail: darcy_mollett@health.state.ak.us

Carrie Predeger
Health and Social Services Planner I
Phone (907) 269-8926
Fax: (907) 267-8995
E-mail: carrie_predeger@health.state.ak.us

Renee James
Project Assistant
Phone: (907) 269-8989
Fax: (907) 269-8995
E-mail: renee_james@health.state.ak.us

Lee L. Walton
Administrative Clerk III
Phone: (907) 269-8990
Fax: (907) 267-8995
E-mail: lee_walton@health.state.ak.us

FRANK H. MURKOWSKI, GOVERNOR
State of Alaska

GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DISABILITIES AND SPECIAL EDUCATION

P.O. Box 240249 • Anchorage, Alaska 99524-0249 • Phone: 907-269-8990 • Fax: 907-269-8995 • Toll Free 888-269-8990

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