

88-49-34

Rose Hagen, Gabriel Jacobs, Wassie Beluda, James Komak, Nettie Peratrovich

Moses Wasillie, moderator

Series: Potlatch series

1975?

Rose Hagen from Manley Hot Springs said she was in Fairbanks for the regional meeting for Indian education. The meeting is for the regional supervisors and it was her first regional meeting. She was elected last October to represent all the villages in the Tanana region. Levi Lott asked what her work was as a parent advisor. Hagen said she represents all the small villages. She listens to what the parents want and then she tells the regional directors. Some schools might need inside plumbing, playground equipment or some villages aren't getting what they need and she serves as the speaker to ask for things. Levi asked her about what is taught in the schools. Hagen said it is up to the parent committee in each of the village schools. She said for example Manley wanted bilingual education, skin sewing and boat building instruction. They got two instructors for skin sewing and bilingual education.

Tom Rush song

Gabriel Jacobs from Healy is in Fairbanks as a member of the parent committee. He was elected to come to the meeting. Levi asked what they want for their school. Jacobs said the school is equipped with what the students need. There are two families with six kids. They are thinking about having field trips with the school. They may go down to Kodiak and then down to Seattle.

Wassie Beluda is from the Lake Iliamna region. He was the chairman of the regional meeting they had in Bristol Bay concerning Indian education. There are twenty-five villages in his region. The meeting he is attending is a statewide meeting concerning Indian education. They are trying to get parents involved in local Indian education with programs such as cultural or art. Their proposal this year was for a field trip. A lot of their children have never been to Anchorage. Levi asked what they would like taught in schools concerning Native heritage. Beluda said he would like to see bilingual teaching. The language is getting lost now.

Buffy Sainte-Marie song

James Komak said he represents the Bering Strait and northwest regions. He is vice-chairman of the region. He is in Fairbanks to attend meetings about the Indian Education Act. There are proposals to make revisions to the act. Levi Lott asked what type of courses people would like taught in his area. Komak said there is an active bilingual language program in their area. Parents would like to see classes in sled making, snowshoe making, and traditional living skills. People in their region said their traditions are disappearing. They started to teach the younger generation Native skills.

Hudson Bay Eskimos perform a song

Nettie Peratrovich, director of Title IV of the Indian Education Act for the state operated schools said last year they had 117 programs through the act. The programs were primarily in the areas supporting the lifestyle, culture and heritage of the individual Native communities in their school system. She said she is attending the statewide Indian education meeting that Alaska state operated schools is holding. They will discuss the overall proposal that goes into the Health, education and Welfare Department in Washington, D.C. to the office of Indian education. They will address the educational needs to come up with a proposal that supplements the basic education program that the state provides for 5700 Alaska Native students in their school system. Levi asked if it was true that Anchorage and Fairbanks won't get this money if they don't teach Indian education. Peratrovich said there are lots of rumors. Bilingual education is handled by Title VII which is another HEW grant. Through the Indian Education Act they received some money to develop Alaska Native studies curriculum. They are presently meeting with and consulting with Alaska Native educators, Alaskan teachers of Natives and other agencies and people who are in the business of Native curriculum. They are developing an Alaska Native Claims textbook which will be available for the schools next year. They are field testing it in a few schools this year. Levi asked how many state operated schools in Alaska. Peratrovich said there are 133 schools. There are several expanded programs. Galena went independent a couple of years ago. Selawik is independent this year. They think this is the trend to go with independent school districts. Levi asked what some of the courses being taught under the Indian Education Act. Peratrovich said the programs are varied such as bilingual programs, cultural heritage programs, survival knowledge and different courses that support the local needs of the people such as flora and fauna knowledge. Some of the schools are using the funds for field trips. Many of the schools are ordering school equipment and supplies. She talked about the construction and use of play decks. They are making the information that the children learn more useful in their lifestyle. She said the Indian Education Act was primarily approved by Congress for all Native American students. They get a per capita share based on how many Native students they have in their schools. Last year they received over one million dollars. They expect less this year because more schools are applying for the funds. The Indian Education Act is an attempt by Congress to address the special needs of their Native students and to involve the parents with the decision about what they want in the school programs.