

Submission Date: Feb 15, 2008

Priority: 1 of 5



Ted Stevens

United States Senator for Alaska

Please Note:

- Fill out one request form for each request
- This form (and any attachments) can be returned via:

Fax - (202) 224-2354
 Mail - The Honorable Ted Stevens
 United States Senate
 522 Hart Senate Office Bldg.
 Washington, D.C. 20510

- Requests are due by February 15, 2008.

FISCAL YEAR 2009 PROJECT REQUEST FORM

Project Name: Toksook Bay Early Learning Center

Project Location: Toksook Bay, Alaska

Project Description (please attach additional pages as required):

This capital project will replace an existing Head Start Center with an early learning center that offers services for children age 0-5 years. This facility is needed to provide a continued safe and healthy early learning environment, to accommodate increasing enrollment in this growing sub-regional center and to allow for the potential co-location of additional services. As this project is a joint venture with the Toksook Bay community, ownership of the new facility should be transferred to the local community upon completion to encourage local ownership and to support emergent local capacity.

(Please see attached sheet for additional information.)

Related Appropriations Bill:

Amount of federal funding requested for FY09: \$500,000

Total funding to complete this project: \$2,500,000

Number of years to fund this project: 1

Matching funds from the State of Alaska: Not yet

Matching funds from local and private entities:

Requests in process.

List legislation that authorizes this project:

[Empty box for listing legislation]

Check all that apply:

- A change in the current laws is necessary in order to proceed with the project. (If so, attach language and a list of laws that need to be amended)
- Bill or report language is needed. (If so, attach requested language)

If this project was funded in prior appropriations bills (within the last five years), list each bill and the amount funded:

[Empty box for listing prior funding]

Amount included in the President's FY09 Budget: _____

Amount included in the State of Alaska FY09 Budget: _____

Check this box if state funding was sought but not provided.

The education of young children is at the heart of this nation's constitutional imperative to promote the general welfare. Children in rural Alaska villages continue to be at high risk due to the difficult circumstances of remote geography and lack of economic and educational opportunity. Rural Alaskan communities are primarily Alaska Native. Less than half of adult Alaska Natives have jobs and half of Alaska Native families have incomes below \$30,000 a year. Children who are able to attend Head Start show a markedly higher rate of success in school, and grow up to become capable, functioning adults. Studies that measure school progress after early childhood development programs, such as Head Start, find lasting impacts on education milestones and high school graduation.

Toksook Bay is a growing sub-regional center, where service providers and state and federal government have elected to concentrate services and facilities. This includes the recent completion of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation sub-regional health clinic. As a result, the existing Head Start center is too small to accommodate the increasing demand for early childhood services. Furthermore, the building exhibits many deficiencies which would be costly to correct, and would still leave the building inadequate to serve the population of young children eligible for early childhood programs such as the local Head Start. A scoping of community structures did not reveal any good alternatives to constructing a new facility.

We believe local ownership of the facility is important. This will foster local engagement in the education of young children and further a strong connection between the facility and the community, and support the continued development of local capacity. Maintaining the status of occupant as opposed to owner would also allow RurAL CAP to decrease our insurance coverage costs and increase funds available for direct services.

Currently, federal law requires that if RurAL CAP is granted funding through the Office of Head Start, RurAL CAP must own the building that is developed. Therefore, if funding were to be awarded through the Office of Head Start we would also seek a change in law along the following lines:

"Upon completion RurAL CAP shall have the option of deeding the completed facility to the local government or recognized IRA council, who shall make the facility available to RurAL CAP for operation of the Head Start program, or any successor early childhood education program."

Sources:

Institute of Social and Economic Research, Status of Alaska Natives 2004, Executive Summary (University of Alaska Anchorage, 2004).

Barnett, W. Steven. Congressional Briefing, Sept. 13, 2002. (National Institute for Early Education Research, 2002).

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FISCAL YEAR 2009 PROJECT REQUEST FORM

Project Name: Remote Rural Alaska Distance Delivery Services

Project Location: Rural CAP central office and 29 rural communities.

Project Description (please attach additional pages as required):

This project will provide the Rural Alaska Community Action Program with the necessary technology to deliver web based trainings and live e-trainings and to create web based peer learning groups for staff members involved in the Head Start, Early Head Start and Parents As Teachers programs in 29 communities in rural Alaska. These annual trainings are required either as part of the Head Start Performance Standards or as set forth by Congress. This project is needed to provide RurAL CAP a cost-efficient and effective means to provide a wide range of trainings for workers dispersed throughout Alaska.

Related Appropriations Bill:

Amount of federal funding requested for FY09: \$750,000

Total funding to complete this project: 1,000,000

Number of years to fund this project: 1

Matching funds from the State of Alaska: request in progress

Matching funds from local and private entities:

RurAL CAP is requesting \$250,000 from other sources. These request are in progress.

If this project was funded in prior appropriations bills (within the last five years), list each bill and the amount funded:

[Empty box for listing prior appropriations bills]

Amount included in the President's FY09 Budget: \$0.00

Amount included in the State of Alaska FY09 Budget: \$0.00

Check this box if state funding was sought but not provided.

List legislation that authorizes this project:

[Empty box for listing authorizing legislation]

Check all that apply:

- A change in the current law is necessary in order to proceed with the project. (If so, attach language and a list of laws that need to be amended.)
- Bill or report language is needed. (If so, attach requested language.)

Early childhood education is an underdeveloped workforce priority in rural Alaska due to limited professional development opportunities and the inequity of local resources for vocational training and higher education. As such, early childhood education is a priority training need for RurAL CAP. A qualified early childhood labor force increases academic success for children and expands the local economic infrastructure of the community. Congress recognized the need for competent and well educated early childhood professionals in the Head Start Reauthorization Act of 1998 and 2007; and the No Child Left Behind Initiative.

Most of the staff for RurAL CAP child development centers are members of the local community. These employees have high retention rates, which provide important program consistency, and serve as positive role models for our children. Involving the entire community and especially Alaska Native educators to educate Alaska Native children is key to addressing issues with learning styles and cultural identities. Currently, many local early childhood workers do not meet the minimum required qualifications as set forth by Congress. Therefore, RurAL CAP implements accelerated professional development plans for each new teacher in order to meet the AA and BA degree requirements they lack. As a result, RurAL CAP's Head Start Program has the highest percentage of degreed teachers in the state. RurAL CAP early childhood staff completed 125 college credits for the Spring 2007 semester through the University of Alaska.

Because many of our child development staff are non-traditional adult learners, 42% of whom have a first language other than English, active learning, interaction with other trainees and ready access to expert teachers are a key component to their academic success. Basic job competencies and higher education courses are currently being delivered through costly annual gatherings in Anchorage or regional hubs, limited site visits by content experts, e-mails, audio conference interaction, access to experts and the Internet and mailings. With budgetary constraints from years of flat line funding from both federal and state sources, RurAL CAP must become more efficient and effective in our ability to provide training and education through distance delivery. Web based trainings, live e-trainings and cohort web based learning groups are the most economical methods to creating a competent, highly skilled workforce in rural Alaska. Group e-trainings also address the problem of access for individual users with limited computer resources. For example, Hooper Bay Head Start employs 12 staff of which 9 are currently pursuing higher education requirements. They share one computer with an Internet connection.

RurAL CAP Training Needs:

- 37% (11 of 30) RurAL CAP Head Start Teachers possess a minimum of an AA degree in Early Childhood Education or a related field. 19 Teachers possess a Child Development Associates Credential. Head Start Reauthorization mandates a Bachelors degree for Teachers by 2013.
- 3.3% (1 of 33) RurAL CAP Assistant Teachers possess a minimum of an AA degree in Early Childhood Education or a related field. 10 Teacher Aides hold a Child Development Associates Credential.
- Family Advocates and Home Visitors complete the UAF-Cornell University Family Empowerment Credential. This 7 credit credential is completed through audio-conferences and three week long face to face intensives in Anchorage. Currently 14 RurAL CAP staff are enrolled in this year's credentialing program.
- Parents As Teachers Family Visitors must receive certification in the PAT Born to Learn Curriculum. The Born to Learn 0 to 3 training is completed through a week-long training in Anchorage. The Born to Learn 3 to 5 training is completed through a three-day training in Anchorage.
- Head Start Performance Standards require annual trainings for staff, such as: Blood Borne Pathogens, Child Abuse and Neglect, CPR/First Aid, and USDA food program requirements.

Sources:

McDowell Group, Inc. Economic Impact of Early Education and Child Care in Alaska (Alaska System for Early Education Development, 2006), <http://seed.alaska.edu/support%20docs/McDowell%20report%20final.pdf>

McDowell Group, Inc. Alaska Native Education Study: A Summary of Research (First Alaskans Institute, 2001), <http://www.ankn.uaf.edu/old/summit/McDowell/mcdowell.pdf>

Submission Date: Feb. 15, 2008

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FISCAL YEAR 2009 PROJECT REQUEST FORM

Project Name: Rural Alaska Head Start Facility Upgrades

Project Location: Alakanuk, Chevak, Emmonak, Haines, Hooper Bay, Kwethluk, Kluti-kaah, Mt. Village, Napaskiak, Stebbins, Tok, Pilot Station

Project Description (please attach additional pages as required):

RurAL CAP operates Head Start and Early Head Start Programs throughout Alaska. The facilities in the communities listed above are inadequate and require extensive repairs and remodeling to ensure that they continue to be safe, cost-effective to operate, and conducive to quality early childhood learning. The Head Start operating budget alone is not sufficient to meet these needs. The upgrades will include energy-efficiency measures, health and safety improvements, increased activity space and other measures. Continued investment in facility upgrades will prevent the need for major facility construction, reduce operating costs, and ensure that the facilities meet Head Start requirements to provide a quality learning environment for young children. The education of young children is at the heart of this nation's constitutional imperative to promote the general welfare. Children who are able to attend Head Start show a markedly higher rate of success in school, and grow up to become capable, functioning adults. Maintaining Head Start Centers in rural Alaska ensures that rural children have continued access to early childhood learning programs.

Related Appropriations Bill: Labor/HHS/Education/HUD

Amount of federal funding requested for FY09: \$150,000

Total funding to complete this project: \$150,000

Number of years to fund this project: 1

Matching funds from the State of Alaska: Not yet

Matching funds from local and private entities:

If this project was funded in prior appropriations bills (within the last five years), list each bill and the amount funded:

Amount included in the President's FY09 Budget: _____

Amount included in the State of Alaska FY09 Budget: _____

Check this box if state funding was sought but not provided.

List legislation that authorizes this project:

Check all that apply:

- A change in the current law is necessary in order to proceed with the project. (If so, attach language and a list of laws that need to be amended)
- Bill or report language is needed. (If so, attach requested language)

We will procure and install alternative energy generation materials in selected locations, taking advantage of wind, water, and solar access, and measure the productivity of replacing traditional wood and petroleum fuels. We will educate residents on the safe and effective use of the alternative energy measures, and maintenance to ensure long-term sustainability. RurAL CAP will partner with the Alaska Village Electric Cooperative, the Cold Climate Housing Research Center and other organizations to develop the most appropriate package of alternative energy options for the program, and to evaluate effectiveness.

The US Department of Energy has an obligation to ensure a diverse supply of reliable, affordable and environmentally sound energy. In President Bush's National Energy Policy statement he issued a challenge to promote energy conservation, modernize our energy infrastructure, and increase our supplies in environmentally sound ways. Through his State of the Union address in 2007, the President also stated the necessity of pursuing alternative energy options and achieving energy independence as essential elements of national security. The federal government also has an obligation to assist low-income individuals who use a high proportion of their income to cover the primary energy needs of their home.

Rural Alaska utilities, schools and households spend approximately \$170M annually on power generation. This number is based on fuel and equipment costs related to electricity. It does not cover biomass fuel use, such as wood burning stoves, one of the most common sources for indoor heat in rural Alaska.

The main sources of heat and electricity for Alaska are subject to rising costs and negatively impact the environment, including indoor air quality. The expenses for small diesel generators include fuel, maintenance and part replacement. The cost of fuel in particular is escalating at an alarming rate. Biomass fuels, such as wood, produce relatively high amounts of pollutants compared to a relatively low efficiency in combustion and energy content. By contrast, a small residential wind turbine can offset approximately 1.2 tons of air pollutants and 200 tons of greenhouse gas pollutants over the course of its useful life.

RurAL CAP's 40-year history of serving rural Alaska with innovative and effective energy conservation and weatherization programs, coupled with widespread recognition and trust among rural Alaskans, make RurAL CAP the logical vehicle to promote alternative energy and deliver a pilot program for communities and seasonal camps. What we learn through this pilot project in rural Alaska could have solid applications in other rural areas of the United States and for household energy consumption in general.

Sources:

MAFA, in collaboration with Northern Economics, Inc. Alaska Rural Energy Plan Initiatives for Improving Energy Efficiency and Reliability, Executive Summary (Alaska Energy Authority, 2004), <http://www.akenergyauthority.org/AEAdocuments/REPV1ExecutiveSummary.pdf>

Godish, Thad. Indoor Environmental Quality (CRC Press, 2001), p. 71.

American Wind Energy Association, "Small Wind Energy Systems: Frequently Asked Questions", http://www.awea.org/smallwind/faq_general.html (accessed February 6, 2008).

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FISCAL YEAR 2009 PROJECT REQUEST FORM

Project Name: Child Development Center Capital Project

Project Location: Anchorage, Alaska

Project Description (please attach additional pages as required):

This is a capital project that will allow RurAL CAP to move their Anchorage based Child Development Center from an outdated building with considerable design flaws and escalating rent to an energy efficient facility with a positive child-centered layout. This move will allow RurAL CAP to provide a higher level of service while controlling costs.

The Child Development Center not only fills a desperate need in Anchorage to provide low-income families with access to affordable quality day care, but also serves to break the cycle of poverty and increase self-sufficiency by delivering services to the parents that include financial management, job skills training, parenting classes and information on health and nutrition for young children.

(Please see attached sheet for additional information.)

Related Appropriations Bill:

Amount of federal funding requested for FY09: \$1,500,000

Total funding to complete this project: \$4,200,000

Number of years to fund this project: 1

Matching funds from the State of Alaska: Not yet

Matching funds from local and private entities:

Requests in process.

List legislation that authorizes this project:

[Empty box for listing legislation]

Check all that apply:

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If this project was funded in prior appropriations bills (within the last five years), list each bill and the amount funded:

[Empty box for listing prior funding]

Amount included in the President's FY09 Budget: _____

Amount included in the State of Alaska FY09 Budget: _____

Check this box if state funding was sought but not provided.

The new center will include adequate indoor Large Motor Skills Rooms—a necessity when going outside is not an option due to darkness or inclement weather—and adequate space for active parent participation in programs and meetings.

Title 1 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act recognized the need for special federal assistance to disadvantaged children in rural and urban areas. This sentiment is echoed through the Department of Health and Human Services' Head Start program and the Department of Agriculture's School Lunch program. In addition, we know that access to affordable child care is a key component for steady employment in low income households. There is also a wide variety of studies which support the theory that access to quality early education programs increases cognitive skills, school readiness and overall academic achievement.

Some studies also note long-term social impacts of early childhood programs for low-income families with strong preschool programs leading to higher rates of high school completion, higher salaries, fewer arrests and fewer out-of-wedlock births.

Anchorage families face increasing child care needs as more families, both single parent and two parent homes, rely on multiple incomes. Some families have moved to Anchorage from rural communities in search of work and are without nearby family connections or a local support network.

RurAL CAP's Child Development Center provides child care and a high quality preschool experience. It is the only full-day, year-round facility in Anchorage that provides wrap around service for parents in low-income households. The center has maintained a 100% completion rate on all required immunizations for children and provides developmental assessments for children, family activities and help reaching self-sufficiency for parents. This center is a vital component of the war against poverty for Anchorage residents and rural Alaska residents residing in Anchorage.

Sources:

McDowell Group, Inc. Economic Impact of Early Education and Child Care in Alaska (Alaska System for Early Education Development, 2006), <http://seed.alaska.edu/support%20docs/McDowell%20report%20final.pdf>

Hauser-Cram, Penny, "Services or Programs that Influence Young Children (0-5) and Their School Completion/Academic Achievement", in Encyclopedia on Early Childhood Development (Centre of Excellence for Early Childhood Development, 2004-2005), 1-2.