Unalaska City School District

The Honorable Sean Parnell
Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 110001
Juneau, AK 99811-0001

Dear Governor Parnell,

I am writing on behalf of the Unalaska City School District Board of Education to urge you to support the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) proposal to include the Alaska Sea Grant Marine Advisory Program (MAP) in the University’s FY11 Operating Budget Request. Currently, 30% of MAP’s six positions are funded by short term grants or are left vacant due to lack of funding. The University is proposing that funding for these MAP positions be moved to regular UAF funded faculty positions.

Unalaska is fortunate to have Reid Brewer as our MAP agent. The City of Unalaska and the School District support the MAP position in Unalaska by providing office space and payment for internet connection and utilities. This is a mutually beneficial partnership that allows Reid to work with our schools, the Museum of the Aleutians, and the Parks, Culture and Recreation Department. Over the years, many students and community members have learned from Mr. Brewer and frequently call upon his expertise. Mr. Brewer is presently preparing two high school teams for participation in the upcoming National Ocean Science Competition, also known as the “Tsunami Bowl.” Without Reid’s guidance and expertise, the high school would have a difficult time implementing this valuable program for our students.

The Marine Advisory Program provides scientific research and academic instruction that is vital to Alaska’s coastal communities which rely so heavily on the fishing industry. As one of too few renewable resources the State enjoys, it makes sense to have our young people study the complex issues surrounding fisheries management and sustainability of the resource. Having a regularly funded MAP agent in communities like Unalaska ensures that our young people have the opportunity to learn about and preserve our State’s important fisheries resources.

Sincerely,

John P. Conwell
Superintendent

Cc: Senator Lyman F. Hoffman
    Representative Bryce Edgmon
    UCSD Board of Education