Outgoing NEA-Alaska President: Students Are Our Future

Tuesday, 03 July 2012

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Jay Barrett/KMXT

The head of Alaska's teachers' union is in Washington D.C. this week for the annual National Education Association meeting. Barb Angaiak, who is completing four years as president of the NEA-Alaska, spoke about several issues important to education in Alaska. She said the governor deciding the state would apply for the waiver of No Child Left Behind requirements is smart move, given the challenges of education in Alaska.

-- (Angaiak NEA 1 -- 38 sec --
"It will be helpful in a number ... adjustments that are required.")

She said many small Alaska schools - some with only two or three teachers for K-through-12 - have had a hard time finding what are called "Highly Qualified" teachers in every subject, which is a requirement of No Child Left Behind:

-- (Angaiak NEA 2 -- 54 sec --
"What happens when you ... there are a number of issues.")

Education funding is something that the Alaska Legislature struggles with every year. Angaiak says she believes that funding schools through the Base Student Allocation method is the best way to ensure staffing and resources are sufficient to properly educate students:

-- (Angaiak NEA 3 -- 46 sec --
"We are disappointed that the ... we can give to each student.")

At the end of the week Angaiak will be turning over the reins of the NEA-Alaska to Ron Fuhrer (furr), a teacher from Anchorage. She will be returning to teach in Bethel this fall after a four-year leave of absence to lead the NEA-Alaska.

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