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Lisa Murkowski's Accomplishments for Education

Education

- Awarded the National Parent Teacher Association's first ever *Congressional Voice for Children* Award.
- Participated, as the lead Republican, in negotiations leading to passage of the Kids in Disasters Well-being, Safety, and Health Act and appointed an Alaskan to the Commission.

Head Start:

As a member of Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pension Committee, Lisa Murkowski successfully negotiated for the priorities of Alaska's Head Start programs to ensure that our youngest children have access to high quality early childhood education that helps to set their feet on the right path to academic success including:

- Increased funding for teacher credentialing and provided flexibility to assist Alaska in recruiting and retaining qualified personnel;
- Ensured that Alaskan education grantees may travel to training conferences;
- Required the federal Office of Head Start to consult with Indian Head Start grantees.
- Ensured that tribal government officials can serve as members of Head Start governing boards.
- Improved and strengthened the Head Start funding formula to ensure additional and more stable funding for Head Start and Indian Head Start grantees.
- Succeeded in expanding eligibility for Head Start services to more families.
- Supported maintaining local control of Head Start curriculum, while strengthening cooperation and communication between Head Start and public K-12 schools.

Since the passage of the Head Start Readiness for School Act, Lisa has:

- Blocked the federal Office of Head Start from closing rural Head Start Centers run by Chugachmuit, Kawerak, Tanana Chiefs Conference, and Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association;
- Pushed the Office of Head Start to schedule full tribal consultation meetings and provide timely notice; and



- Requested funding to build a much-needed Head Start Center in Toksook Bay.

K-12:

- Works closely with Alaskan educators, parents, and community organizations to achieve changes to the federal No Child Left Behind Act.
- Persuaded the U.S. Department of Education to allow Alaskan schools to measure success by the growth of student academic achievement instead of a one-shot score on state tests.
- Secured the only waiver in the nation from the NCLB provision that would have required remote, rural schools to transport students to schools in other communities.
- Increased senior federal government decision makers' understanding of the challenges faced by educators in Alaska by taking them on tours of rural schools and arranging meetings with Alaska's school superintendents, principals, and other education leaders.
- Defended and sustained Medicaid reimbursements to schools for the services they provide to Medicaid-eligible students with disabilities.
- Improve the Teacher Quality section of the Higher Education Act to fund and improve teacher and principal training, residency, and mentoring.
- Extended funding for the Secure Rural Schools program for timber-dependent communities with a new formula that is more advantageous to Alaska.
- Saved the Alaska Native Educational Equity program during both the Bush and Obama Administrations.
- Provided \$500,000 for Skills Alaska, a statewide student success program, through the Avant-Garde Learning Foundation.

College Students and Faculty:

- Successfully enacted legislation to make Ilisagvik College in Barrow eligible Federal Land Grant School funding (2008).
- Consistently supports funding for Ilisagvik College through the Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities grant program.
- Consistently supports funding for certain rural campuses of the University of Alaska through the Strengthening Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian Serving Institutions program.
- Sponsored, fought vigorously for, and won a provision to make it easier for lower rank/lower income members of the military, their spouses, and their children to qualify for federal Pell Grants (2007).
- Sponsored and won authorization for the Alaska Native Science and Engineering Program at the University of Alaska (2008).

- Inspired the creation of and directly negotiated the details of the new College Access Challenge Grant Program (2007) to help more at-risk students prepare for and attend college.

Negotiated provisions in the College Cost Reduction and Access Act and the Higher Education Opportunity Act to:

- Ensure that students with disabilities receive a quality higher education
- Negotiated the provision to allow Ilisagvik College in Barrow to access funding to improve and expand coursework for tribal governance and tribal public policy.
- Improve campus safety.
- Ensure home school students have access to federal financial aid for college and job training.
- Create a new loan deferment program for National Guard and Reserve who are called to active duty.
- Increase the maximum Pell Grant.
- Create a new Public Service Loan Forgiveness program for those who devote 10 years to local, state, federal or non-profit public service employment.
- Cut student loan interest rates.
- Make the cost of college and the availability of federal student aid more transparent for students and parents.
- Make it easier for low-income students to qualify for zero Estimated Family Contribution in calculating federal student aid.
- Lower the cost of textbooks, including requiring publishers to sell textbooks and other materials separately and to require colleges to take steps to reduce the cost of textbooks and other materials.
- Simplify the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) form.
- Require the U.S. Department of Education to provide a one-stop financial aid website, to create a webpage to provide information about financial aid for military service members and veterans, and to post public and private financial aid opportunities for individuals pursuing a career in science, technology, engineering, and math fields.
- Improve accountability for federal student aid funds used by U.S. students at foreign medical and nursing schools.
- Enable orphans, foster and homeless youth to access affordable federal student aid.
- Allow full-time firefighters, Tribal College and University faculty, librarians, and speech-language pathologists to be eligible for loan forgiveness under the Perkins Student Loan program.

- Authorize the Project GRAD (Graduation Really Achieves Dreams) program, which has proven successful in helping at-risk students to succeed in college in Kenai and other locations nationwide.
- Improve and continue the federal TRIO programs, such as Upward Bound, Student Support Services, and GEAR Up, that assist at-risk youth to succeed in college.

Job Training:

- Increased funding to the Southwest Alaska Vocational and Education Center – King Salmon.
- Increased funding to the Alaska Native Aviation Training Center and for Yuut Elitnaurviat (The People's Learning Center) - Bethel.
- Increased funding to the Northwestern Alaska Career and Technical Center – Nome.
- Provided \$308,000 to expand vocational training including distance learning through the Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska.