

Parnell Unveils Major Education Initiative
Governor's Performance Scholarship

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**Governor Parnell Unveils Major Education Initiative
Governor's Performance Scholarship Will Boost Opportunities**

October 6, 2009, Anchorage, Alaska – Governor Sean Parnell today unveiled a proposal that would allow all Alaska high school students to earn tuition scholarships for use after high school at qualifying Alaska schools. The Governor's Performance Scholarship, or GPS, is a merit-based scholarship for Alaska high school students. To qualify, students will have to take four years of math, language arts and science, in addition to three years of social studies.

“We've seen too many young people leave high school without graduating and too many young people need remedial help after graduating high school,” Governor Parnell said. “I want to set the bar higher for our high school students to promote preparedness.”

Parnell proposed that an A student in high school would get a 100% tuition scholarship award; a B student would get a 75% tuition scholarship award, and a C+ student would get a 50% tuition scholarship award. The Governor's Performance Scholarship could be used at the University of Alaska, any certified, in-state job training institution and at other certified post-secondary institutions in Alaska.

“By giving more students the opportunity to earn a scholarship like this and by requiring it to be used at an in-state institution, we are building a better-trained workforce for Alaska and giving young people hope for their future,” Governor Parnell said.

The governor will ask the legislature to fence off \$400 million (of almost \$8 billion currently in the Constitutional Budget Reserve Fund and Statutory Budget Reserve Fund) of its savings to generate earnings for the scholarships. Governor Parnell said he intended the funding mechanism to be responsible and sustainable, without the scholarships becoming a drain on the general fund.

“Not only will Alaska's students benefit from this fiscally responsible, sustainable plan, we will have a greater economy for having invested the earnings from the money,” the governor added.

The governor's comments on the scholarship program will be available on the governor's satellite window at 3:30 p.m.

Audio from today's announcement is available at:
http://www.gov.state.ak.us/audio/GPS_WestHigh_100609.mp3.