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Principals study policy

By VALERIE MEEHAN

A tough attendance policy was rejected by the Mat-Su Borough School Board Monday night, because it would exempt Palmer High School.

"I have a real problem with this, I feel we're dividing into two districts," School Board Member Pat Hunsicker said of the proposal, which is a watered-down version of the pilot program at Wasilla High School, but much stricter than the current district-wide rules. It would have applied to Susitna Valley and Wasilla high schools.

"If it's not good enough for the third school, it shouldn't be good enough for the other two," said School Board Member Pat O'Hara.

Palmer High School Principal Charlie Akers' opposition stopped the proposal from becoming district policy. He said he does not oppose the thrust of the stricter attendance regulations, but thinks more study is needed.

"It needs to be carefully looked at from all angles," Akers said. "It's the most important policy in the district, the only one we use every day."

Because of Susitna Valley High School's interest in the 1984-85 Wasilla pilot attendance policy, the two schools' principals and assistant principals drafted a com-
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Colony coins back in circulation

By JIM SPRINGER

Bingles don't jingle the way they used to, but in this 50th-anniversary year of the Matanuska Valley colonization, they are making a come back of sorts.

In 1935, the token coins that colonists called bingles could be traded for groceries, drugs, hardware and whatnot at the trading post in what is now Palmer. Bingles were coins minted specifically for use in the Matanuska farming colony to substitute for regular coinage, which was scarce in that depression era.

Each of the 202 colonists who settled in the Valley were issued \$30 worth of bingles each month, said colonist Louis Odsather. An extra \$5 worth was thrown in for each child in a family.

Bingles were in circulation for about a year and a half in the early days of colonization, Odsather said. They filled a need during the first months of colonization by simplifying the bookkeeping at the trading post.

The settlers were able to get credit at the trading post to buy the goods they needed, and had 30 years to pay back their debt. But with 202 families needing goods, the paperwork to keep track of the purchases and the debts

overwhelmed the accounting system, said Odsather.

The bingles were minted to simplify the paperwork, with the debt being recorded in \$30 amounts each month, and the coins being used for small purchases. They were also traded between individuals for small transactions, said Odsather.

While there are very few original bingles still around, the dies for the minting were recently discovered in Seattle and a commemorative minting has been done for the upcoming 50th Year Colony Celebration.

The celebration committee has had 2,500 complete sets of the coins minted, and they are being sold to help pay for expenses of the celebration.

The Colony Days celebration is scheduled for the weekend of June 7, 8 and 9 in Palmer. It will honor the families who came up from farms in Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan to Alaska as part of a Federal Emergency Relief Administration plan in 1935.

Commemorative sets of bingles can be purchased at the Alaska Rural Rehabilitation Corp. building at 248 East Dahlia St. in Palmer.



NEWFANGLED BINGLES—George Crowther, manager of Alaska Rural Rehabilitation Corporation, displays sets of commemorative bingles minted to benefit the upcoming Colony Days Celebration.

t count

percent of the year on the Slope, Notti said. That method, which Notti said conformed to regulations, resulted in a population count of 7,721.

Notti said that there were no regulations defining population under the municipal property tax limitation statute, and that his department did not have to follow the "51-percent" rule.

The commissioner said that under one method, 4,916 oil workers were counted and under the other, for revenue-sharing purposes, 2,466 were counted.

The North Slope Borough and CRA maintain that the oilfield workers place a demand on the services of the municipality and therefore are rightly included in the tax-cap determination.

The appellants say that the CRA has shown inconsistency by frequently changing the way it determines population numbers.

"The basic issue that we're
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