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NEWS RELEASE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: November 8, 2005

No. 05-188

New Mt. Edgecumbe Science Facility Dedicated

(Juneau) – Governor Frank H. Murkowski dedicated a new science facility Tuesday at Mt. Edgecumbe High School, the state-run boarding school in Sitka.

The 7,500 square-foot building contains three science classrooms, a computer room, a social studies classroom, a room where teachers can prepare materials for students' labs and faculty offices.

"I am pleased to be part of dedicating this new science facility," said the governor. "This much-needed facility brings the campus closer together and will improve the quality of science instruction at Mt. Edgecumbe."

The new building allows the school to put its science faculty under one roof. The teachers had been scattered in temporary classrooms and a lab at the University of Alaska Southeast.

The science facility is part of a Mt. Edgecumbe expansion project promoted by the governor that renovated an unused building into a 62-bed dormitory, converted marginal space into five classrooms and will upgrade the exterior of the boys' and girls' dorms.

"Now 400 students, many of whom are Alaska Native, will enjoy the benefits of the camaraderie and academic rigor that have characterized this school since it was founded in 1947," Murkowski told the school's students and staff assembled in the B.J. McGillis Gymnasium. "Here you form lifelong friendships, forge the first steps of careers, and prepare to follow in the footsteps of Mt. Edgecumbe alumni who have helped to build our state."

Federal funds disbursed to Alaska as part of the Jobs and Growth Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2003 paid for the \$7.5 million expansion.

Mt. Edgecumbe now enrolls about 400 students, 90 percent of whom are Alaska Native. It regularly surpasses the state's proficiency targets for making adequate yearly progress under the federal No Child Left Behind Act.

“Great facilities are important, but it’s the hard work of students and the dedication of a caring staff that defines a school,” said Education Commissioner Roger Sampson.

For more information: Bill Denkinger, Director of Mt. Edgecumbe High School, 966-3201; or Eric Fry, Information Officer Department of Education & Early Development, 465-2851.

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