



**Commissioner Roger Sampson**  
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### **Mt. Edgecumbe High School and IBM launch partnership**

On Monday, April 17, Mt. Edgecumbe High School, IBM, and Roger Sampson, Alaska Commissioner of Education & Early Development, will launch the Native American Partnership in Education Program.

The program's goal is to provide Mt. Edgecumbe students with the skills they need to compete in the global economy from their own villages and cities, and contribute to Alaska's sustainable economic growth.

Mt. Edgecumbe is the state-operated boarding school in Sitka, drawing about 400 students from villages and cities across Alaska. Nearly 95 percent of its students are Alaska Native.

IBM, which has been working with the University of Alaska and Mt. Edgecumbe for more than seven years, recognized the need to establish a formal program based on its Partners in Education framework and its years of experience in working with diverse and minority communities, company officials said.

Partners in Education provides a framework for helping communities to organize and to focus on a common goal of building world-class education. IBM is donating to Mt. Edgecumbe computer hardware and information technology services, and it is providing summer "externships" in which Mt. Edgecumbe staff will learn from company staff at IBM. IBM employees will provide technical support and team-teach with Mt. Edgecumbe faculty in the fall.

"We are grateful to IBM for supporting the need of rural Alaska students to be able to compete in the global economy," said Commissioner Sampson.

"Because of the outstanding IBM support we have been able to become a technology leader in student technology learning applications," said Bill Denkinger, Mt. Edgecumbe superintendent.

"Dedicated executives at IBM have built a strong partnership with staff and students at Mt. Edgecumbe," said Todd Bergman, school administrator and IBM partnership coordinator at Mt. Edgecumbe. "We are now in a position of being able to provide a new generation of server-based computing applications for the learning community at Mt. Edgecumbe, an environment more closely aligned to the computing environments of government, business and industry."

“ ‘Innovation that matters’ is more than just a marketing tagline. It’s a core belief and mission statement for all 329,000 global IBM employees,” said Bob Moffat, Senior Vice President of Integrated Operations, at IBM. “IBM has been a leader in cultural diversity for more than 80 years and it’s in our DNA to support diverse and minority communities for a successful future.”

“As we have grown and extended our business operations throughout the nation and the world, we are continually challenged to help educate and train Alaska Natives to fill key positions,” said Crawford Patkotak, a board member of the Arctic Slope Regional Corp. “We applaud IBM’s initiative and are proud to be part of the Partner in Education program.”

Sitka will serve as a template for similar programs that can be extended across the Lower 48 states in the future, IBM officials said.

At noon, Moffat and Commissioner Sampson will address the Sitka Chamber of Commerce and the Sitka Economic Development Association at a luncheon at the Westmark Sitka.

The community event will begin at 1:30 p.m. The school will assemble for a formal cultural greeting with dancing and gifts, formal introductions, and speeches by Moffat and Commissioner Sampson.

Reporters who cannot attend in person may call in to hear the assembly and ask questions afterward. Call 1-800-779-8412. The password is “education.”

Other IBM officials scheduled to attend the day’s events are: Terry Braun, Native American Executive Task Force co-chair and Director of the Complex Solution Design Center; Todd Kelsey, International Technical Support Organization Manager; and Michele Morningstar, Native American Program Manager for IBM’s Global Workforce Diversity Organization.

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