

# State Board of Education and Early Development

Annual Report to the Alaska State Legislature

January 2024



## **State Board of Education and Early Development**

James Fields, Chair

Lorri Van Diest, First Vice-Chair

Sally Stockhausen, Second Vice-Chair

Jeff Erickson

Bob Griffin

Barbara Tyndall

Pamela Dupras

Lieutenant Colonel Jeremiah Hammill, Military Advisor

Felix Myers, Student Advisor

Joshua Pak, Student Advisor-Elect

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## Alaska State Constitution Education Clause

### Section 7.1 - Public Education.

The legislature shall by general law establish and maintain a system of public schools open to all children of the State, and may provide for other public educational institutions. Schools and institutions so established shall be free from sectarian control. No money shall be paid from public funds for the direct benefit of any religious or other private educational institution.

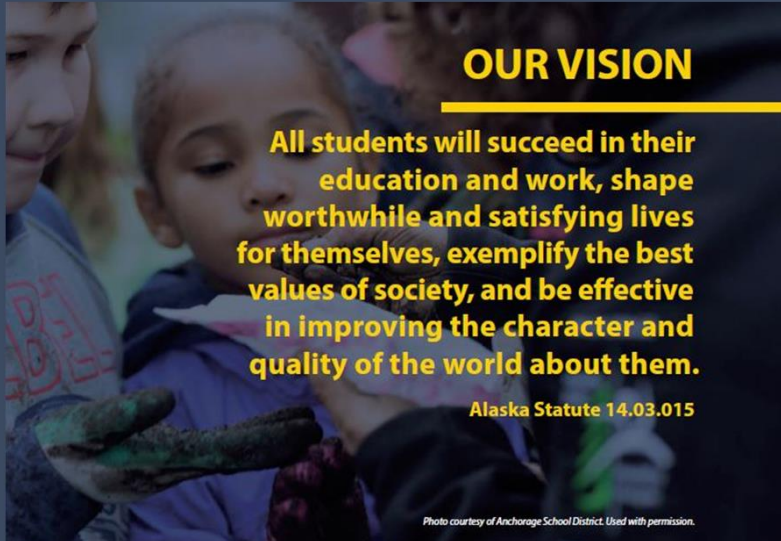
### AS 14.07.168. Report to the legislature

Not later than the 30<sup>th</sup> legislative day of each regular session of the legislature, the board shall prepare and present in person to the legislative committees having jurisdiction over education an annual report that describes the efforts of the board to develop, maintain, and continuously improve a comprehensive quality public education system, as provided for under the bylaws of the board. The report must include:

1. a summary of the resolves and rationales provided in support of policy decisions made under AS 14.03.015;
2. program and curriculum changes made, discussed, or recommended in meetings held under AS 14.07.125;
3. additional information relevant to efforts made to improve and maintain the public education system.

## OUR MISSION

**An excellent education  
for every student  
every day.**



## The Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) Alaska Education Challenge

### Purpose Statement

The Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) provides *information, resources, and leadership* to support an excellent education for every student every day.

### Alaska's Education Challenge

Over the last six years, parents, students, educators, policymakers, tribal leaders, partner organizations, and local school boards have stepped forward to answer Alaska's call to action to create a shared vision for improving our public education system – the result is Alaska's Education Challenge.



That vision starts with three shared commitments: (1) Increase Student Success, (2) Cultivate Safety and Well-Being, and (3) Support Responsible and Reflective Learners.

In order to meet Alaska’s education challenges, we are addressing our public education system through three components:

1. A call to action: Shared Commitments
2. A focus of efforts: Measurable Goals
3. A prioritization of change: Targeted Strategies

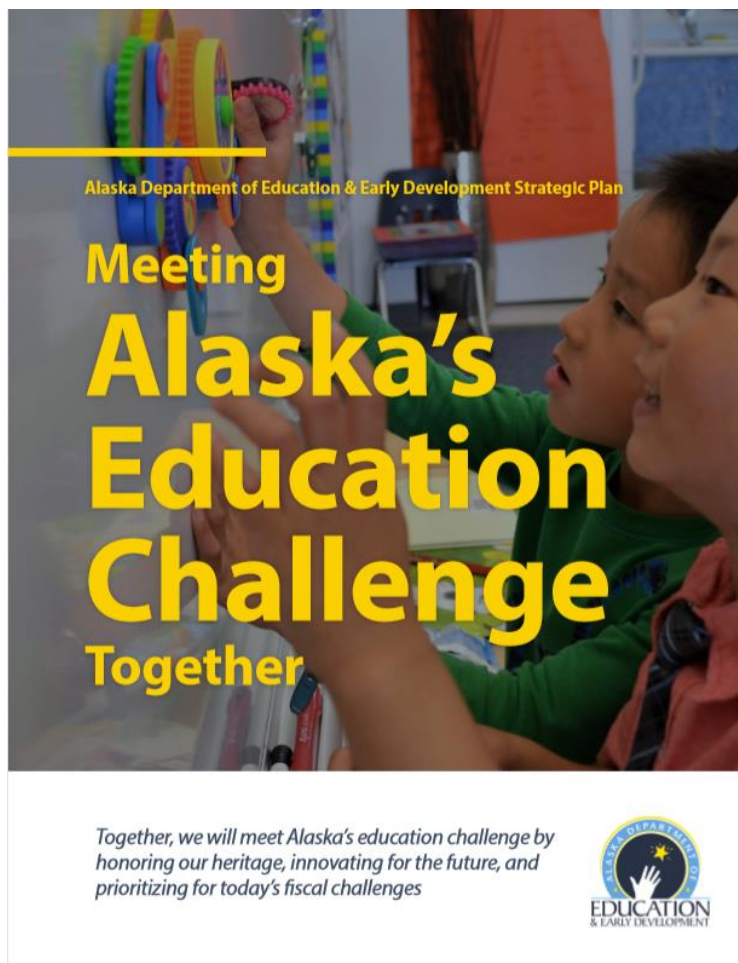


Under the State Board of Education (Board) leadership, DEED has been collaborating with partner organizations to create and implement a strategic plan focused on five specific, measurable goals that are most likely to improve student outcomes from the dialogue and recommendations brought forward through the Alaska's Education Challenge.

The five goals are:

1. Support all students to read at grade level by the end of third grade
2. Increase career, technical, and culturally relevant education to meet student and workforce needs
3. Close the achievement gap by ensuring equitable educational rigor and resources
4. Prepare, attract, and retain effective education professionals
5. Improve the safety and well-being of students through school partnerships with families, communities, and tribes

To learn more about the Alaska's Education Challenge and view the strategic plan, visit <https://education.alaska.gov/akedchallenge>.



## REGULATIONS AND OTHER BOARD ACTIONS

### Regulation Changes

In January 2023, the Board opened a period of public comment on the proposed regulations related to the Alaska Reads Act (House Bill 114, Chapter 40, SLA 2022), which became law on July 15, 2022 with an effective date of July 1, 2023. In April, the board adopted those changes:

- Adding new regulations 4 AAC 06.300 through 4 AAC 06.390 to implement a department reading program;
- Adding new regulations 4 AAC 06.400 through 4 AAC 06.490 to implement a district reading improvement program;
- Amending teacher certification regulations 4 AAC 12.300(g), 4 AAC 12.305, 4 AAC 12.310, 4 AAC 12.345, 4 AAC 12.407, and 4 AAC 12.900(a), adding new sections to teacher certification regulations 4 AAC 12.310, 4 AAC 12.392, 4 AAC 12.393, 4 AAC 12.409, and repealing 4 AAC 12.900(b) to address teacher certification requirements; and,
- Adding new regulations 4 AAC 05.100, 4 AAC 60.190 through 4 AAC 60.990, adopting by reference Early Education Program Standards, and repealing 4 AAC 60.037 and 4 AAC 60.180 to implement an early education grant program.

In March 2023, the Board adopted regulation changes to Out-of-State Teacher Reciprocity<sup>1</sup> in response to SB 20 (Chapter 69, SLA 2022).

In March 2023, the Board also adopted regulation changes to the Limited Teacher Certificate<sup>2</sup> requirements in response to HB 19 (Chapter 73, SLA 2022).

In April 2023, the Board opened public comment for regulation changes pertaining to a statewide student assessment system under 4 AAC 06.710. The amendment includes the addition of a Statewide Screening Tool<sup>3</sup> described in AS 14.30.760, adopted under the Alaska Reads Act, HB 114 (Chapter 40, SLA 2022). After public comment closed, the Board voted to approve the adoption of the proposed regulation at the June 2023 board meeting.

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<sup>1</sup> [NOTICE OF PROPOSED CHANGES TO OUT OF STATE RECIPROCITY IN THE REGULATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT - Alaska Online Public Notices](#)

<sup>2</sup> [NOTICE OF PROPOSED CHANGES TO LIMITED TEACHER CERTIFICATE IN THE REGULATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT - Alaska Online Public Notices \(state.ak.us\)](#)

<sup>3</sup> [NOTICE OF PROPOSED CHANGES ON THE STATEWIDE SCREENING TOOL IN THE REGULATIONS OF DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT - Alaska Online Public Notices](#)



In June 2023, the Board opened a period of public comment on the amendment of Interscholastic Activities<sup>4</sup>, 4 AAC 06.115. At that same Board meeting, verbal public comment on this proposed change spanned multiple hours. During public comment, the Board received over 1,300 responses. At the July 2023 Board meeting, there was again multiple hours of verbal public comment. In August 2023, the Board held a special meeting to vote to approve the regulation.

In June 2023, the Board opened a period of public comment to add new regulations 4 AAC 67.010 through 4 AAC 67.900 to implement a Virtual Education Consortium<sup>5</sup> defined by AS 14.30.800. After public comment ended, that regulation was adopted by the board in July 2023.

In October 2023, the Board opened a period of public comment concerning changes to Limited Teacher Certification and the Seal of Biliteracy<sup>6</sup>. A public notice on this topic was originally issued in December 2022, but additional regulation changes required a supplemental notice.

In December 2023, the Board opened a period of public comment for proposed regulation changes regarding Assessment Cut Scores<sup>7</sup> and Assessment Participation Guidelines<sup>8</sup>.

At the December meeting, the Board also adopted the proposed regulation changes for the Limited Teacher Certificates and Seal of Biliteracy mentioned above.

## Resolutions and Other Board Actions

In January 2023, the Board approved their annual report to the legislature<sup>9</sup> and approved a Teacher Apprentice Program Board Resolution<sup>10</sup>.

In March 2023, the Board approved the Fiscal Year 2024 School Construction<sup>11</sup> and Major Maintenance<sup>12</sup> Project Ranking Lists, selected the State-Tribal Education Compact

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<sup>4</sup> [NOTICE OF PROPOSED CHANGES ON INTERSCHOLASTIC ACTIVITIES IN THE REGULATIONS OF DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT - Alaska Online Public Notices \(state.ak.us\)](#)

<sup>5</sup> [NOTICE OF PROPOSED CHANGES ON VIRTUAL EDUCATION IN THE REGULATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT - Alaska Online Public Notices \(state.ak.us\)](#)

<sup>6</sup> [SUPPLEMENTAL NOTICE OF PROPOSED CHANGES TO LIMITED TEACHER CERTIFICATE AND SEAL OF BILITERACY IN THE REGULATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT - Alaska Online Public Notices \(state.ak.us\)](#)

<sup>7</sup> [NOTICE OF PROPOSED CHANGES IN achievement levels for English Language Arts and Mathematics and CHANGES IN accountability sub scores - Alaska Online Public Notices \(state.ak.us\)](#)

<sup>8</sup> [NOTICE OF PROPOSED CHANGES ON PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES FOR INCLUSION OF ALASKA STUDENTS IN STATE ASSESSMENTS - Alaska Online Public Notices](#)

<sup>9</sup> [2022 Annual Report to the Alaska State Legislature - submitted February 2023.pdf](#)

<sup>10</sup> [01-2023 SBOE Alt Teacher Pathways Resolution.pdf \(alaska.gov\)](#)

<sup>11</sup> [Final FY2024 School Construction DEED Capital Improvement Project Rankings \(alaska.gov\)](#)

<sup>12</sup> [Final FY2024 Major Maintenance DEED Capital Improvement Project Rankings \(alaska.gov\)](#)

Demonstration Tribal Partners Awardees<sup>13</sup>, and approved charter school renewals for the Highland Academy Charter School and the Frontier Charter School.

The Board also adopted Resolution 02-2023<sup>14</sup> supporting the preservation of the opportunity for student athletes while balancing competitive fairness, inclusion, and safety for all to compete.

In April 2023, five schools were recognized as Purple Star School designees, and Board Military Advisor Lt. Col. Fowley attended the designation ceremony:

Anchorage School District

- Aurora Elementary
- Frontier Charter School
- Orion Elementary
- Ravenwood Elementary

Fairbanks North Star Borough School District

- Ladd Elementary

Later that month, multiple Board members attended the 2023 Alaska Science of Reading Symposium which brought together Alaskan educators, parents, and partners to ground Alaska education stakeholders in a cohesive understanding of the science of reading and to engage in conversations about Alaska’s reading performance and how to move the needle on student outcomes.

In June, the Board approved the establishment of the Alyeska Reading Institute with the following conditions:

- The Alyeska Reading Institute shall be established within DEED to support students and educators in meeting the outcomes of the Alaska Reads Act, and
- DEED shall retain oversight for the Alyeska Reading Institute

The Board also approved the Fiscal Year 2024 DEED budget and the Computer Science State Plan<sup>15</sup>.

At that June 2023 meeting, the board also recognized five excellent Career and Technical Education Programs<sup>16</sup>:

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<sup>13</sup> [11.0 State Tribal Education Compact Cover Memo Business Meeting.pdf \(alaska.gov\)](#)

<sup>14</sup> [02-2023 SBOE Resolution Preserving the Opportunity for Athletes.pdf \(alaska.gov\)](#)

<sup>15</sup> [Microsoft Word - Alaska Computer Science State Plan v 2023.05.05](#)

<sup>16</sup> [5.1 Alaska State Board of Education proposed CTE Program Recognition.pdf](#)

- Minto School in Yukon-Koyukuk School District, Scott Breckner, Hydroponics Growing
- Delta/Greeley School District, Boat Building
- Alaska Resource Education, Powerful Opportunities for Women in Resources Camp
- Annette Island School District, Scuba Program
- Bristol Bay Regional Career and Technical Education Programs, Fisheries Program

In July 2023, the Board approved DEED to pursue the sale of the Stratton Library, with the Governor’s approval, and with the following conditions:

- Proceeds from the sale of the Stratton Library shall be directed towards the Sheldon Jackson Museum, and
- DEED shall retain oversight of the Sheldon Jackson Museum including its facilities, operations, and grounds.

At the July 2023 meeting, the Board also approved the continuation of the Alaska Pacific University’s initial Teacher Preparation Program state approval through June 30, 2030.

In October 2023, the Board voted in favor to place the Alaska Bible College Teacher Preparation Program into provisional approval status.

Later that month, the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education (ACPE) hosted the first annual Alaska FAFSA Summit.

In December 2023, the Board approved their draft annual report to the legislature<sup>17</sup> and a draft Tribal Compacting report to the legislature<sup>18</sup>.

### New Officers, Members, and Staff

The Board has five committees with the following membership:

<b>Reading</b>	<b>CTE &amp; Cultural Education</b>	<b>Safety &amp; Well-Being</b>	<b>Tribal Compacting</b>	<b>Effective Educators</b>
Rob Griffin <i>Committee Chair</i>	Lorri Van Diest <i>Committee Chair</i>	Jeff Erickson <i>Committee Chair</i>	Vacant as of March 2023 <i>Committee Chair</i>	Sally Stockhausen <i>Committee Chair</i>
Sally Stockhausen	Jeff Erickson	Lorri Van Diest	Bob Griffin	James Fields
		Felix Myers	James Fields	Lt. Col. James Fowley
				Felix Myers

<sup>17</sup> [3.1 2024 Annual Report to the Alaska State Legislature.pdf](#)

<sup>18</sup> [4.1 2023.12.1 SBOE STEC Legislative Report final draft.pdf \(alaska.gov\)](#)

Members Sandy Kowalski and Keith Hamilton ended their service as Board members in March 2023.

Chair James Fields was reappointed to the REAA Representative seat on March 1, 2023. His term will expire on March 1, 2028.

In June 2023, Board members re-elected James Fields as the Chair to serve from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024. Members also elected Lorri Van Diest as the First Vice Chair and Sally Stockhausen as the Second Vice Chair for the term.

The Board appointed two seats to the Mt. Edgecumbe High School Advisory Board in June 2023. Tanya Kitka was appointed the Alumni Representative and Robyn Burke was appointed as the Parent Representative for Term A. In December 2023, the Board appointed Amber Cunningham as the Parent Representative for Term A on the Mt. Edgecumbe High School Advisory Board.

The Board approved the Commissioner and Acting Commissioner appointments of Lacey Sanders as the Deputy Commissioner; Karen Morrison as the Director of the Division Finance and Support Services Director; Carol Boatman as the Alyeska Reading Institute Director; and Kathijo Jolin as the Executive Secretary. Lacey Sanders has since vacated the position.

In July 2023, two new members were sworn into Board service. Barbara Tyndall fills the Fourth Judicial District seat, and her term expires on March 1, 2028. Pamela Dupras fills the At-Large seat, and her term also expires on March 1, 2028.

In July 2023, the board appointed Dr. Deena Bishop as the Commissioner of the Department of Education and Early Development, effective August 9, 2023.

In October 2023, the Board appointed members to the following boards and commissions:

<b>Boards and Commissions</b>	<b>Member</b>
<a href="#"><u>Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education (ACPE)</u></a>	Lorri Van Diest
<a href="#"><u>Governor’s Council on Disabilities &amp; Special Education</u></a>	Sally Stockhausen
<a href="#"><u>Public School Trust Fund Advisory Committee</u></a> (AS 37.14.120)	James Fields Bob Griffin Barbara Tyndall
<a href="#"><u>Education Commission of the States</u></a>	James Fields Pamela Dupras (alternate)
<a href="#"><u>Mt. Edgecumbe High School Advisory Board</u></a>	Sally Stockhausen

On December 6, 2023, the Board appointed Joshua Pak as Student-Advisor Elect.

## SIGNIFICANT STEPS

### Assessment Changes: AK STAR

DEED has partnered with NWEA to implement a creative approach to balanced statewide assessment that better reflects learning throughout the school year and helps educators target instruction to students' individual needs. The Alaska System of Academic Readiness (AK STAR) is designed to streamline the testing experience for grades 3–9 in the areas of English language arts (ELA) and mathematics.

This innovative Alaska statewide assessment system will:

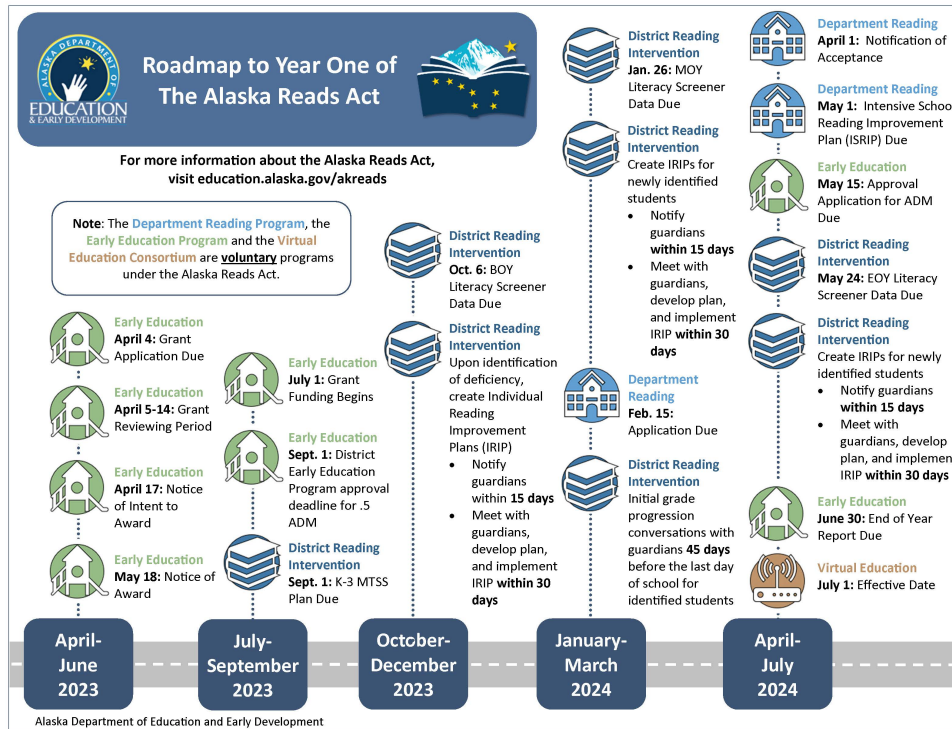
- Streamline testing and maximize efficiency. A connected system provides a more seamless experience between interim and end-of-year assessments for students and educators and reduces testing events (starting in school year 2022–2023).
- Increase coherence across interim and end-of-year tests so educators can drive students toward consistent, challenging learning targets.
- Help to amplify student learning. Alaska's innovative assessment system will give educators, students, and families meaningful insights on student strengths and areas of need to support students in reaching their highest academic potential.
- Increase opportunities for students and schools to show growth. Fall-to-spring and year-to-year growth data, along with access to normative data, are available to both districts and DEED. Within-year growth data enables all students and educators to show and celebrate growth and provides districts with a more complete view of school performance as they work to ensure equitable educational rigor and resources for all Alaska students.

DEED is committed to a multi-year approach to design and review AK STAR that included development of Achievement Level Descriptors and standard setting process in 2022, followed by a validation study and policy review committee in 2023. This process will ensure that the achievement levels best reflect student performance and best inform schools, teachers, families, and students of where they are in their learning towards the Alaska Content Standards.

As DEED transitions to this new assessment model of connecting fall and winter MAP Growth interim assessments to the spring AK STAR, the usual assessment timeline has been extended. Reports will be provided to districts in early March 2024, following the approval of cut scores from the State Board of Education and the completion of reporting with NWEA.

## Implementing the Alaska Reads Act (HB 114, Chapter 40, SLA 2022)

Supporting all students to read at grade level by the end of third grade is the top priority identified in Alaska’s Education Challenge. The Alaska Reads Act (HB 114, Chapter 40, SLA 2022) became law on July 1, 2023. DEED’s work to address pervasive issues in early literacy preceded the Alaska Reads Act, is occurring alongside the implementation of the law, and will continue in tandem with the requirements of the Alaska Reads Act in the future.



The four main components that strategically align for successful implementation of the Alaska Reads Act are listed below and described in subsections with more detail:

1. District Reading Intervention
2. Department Reading Program
3. Early Education
4. Distance Reading Consortium

### 1. District Reading Intervention

Each school district is required to offer intensive reading intervention services based on the students in K-3 who exhibit a reading deficiency to assist students in achieving reading proficiency at or above grade level by the end of third grade. Intervention services must be

based on the Science of Reading methodology. Reading intervention must be provided in addition to, not in replace of, the core reading instruction, which is provided to all students in a general education classroom.

In order to identify which students need reading intervention, DEED has adopted a Statewide Literacy Screening Tool (mClass from Amplify) for the early detection of reading deficiencies, including characteristics of dyslexia. The literacy screening tool will be administered three times each school year to track students' literacy progress.

Students who demonstrate sufficient reading skills on the first screening of the school year will not have to repeat the screening. When a reading deficiency is identified, the district is responsible for notifying the student's parent or guardian and providing a Student Individual Reading Improvement Plan (IRIP).

DEED chose mClass by Amplify as the state-provided literacy screener. 96% of school districts have adopted mClass as their screening tool; however, school districts can choose a different literacy screening tool if approved by DEED and paid for by the school district.

The statewide fall 2023 window for the literacy screener was open from September 4, 2023 through September 29, 2023. Although it is standard practice to administer a literacy screener in a two-week period, DEED provided four weeks for school districts because it was the first implementation of a new assessment process.

DEED is also offering professional development opportunities to meet the AK Reads Act requirements. DEED will provide up to 1,700 educator professional development opportunities, at no cost to the educators. One of those professional development opportunities is a DEED-sponsored Science of Reading course called *Keys to Literacy*<sup>19</sup>. During the School Year 2023-2024, DEED will offer 11 cohorts of *Keys to Literacy*.

The 2023 Alaska Science of Reading Symposium was a success with over 1,000 in-person attendees and 650 virtual attendees. The 2024 Alaska Science of Reading Symposium will be April 19-21, 2024 at the Anchorage Dena'ina Civic Convention Center.

## **2. Department Reading Program**

DEED is required to implement a Department Reading Program providing direct support and intervention services to the lowest 25% performing schools. Reading specialists from DEED will coach, train, and mentor teachers and school staff. Additionally, DEED reading specialists will help create specific improvement goals for each school selected.

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<sup>19</sup> [Alaska Reads Professional Development - Keys to Literacy](#)

DEED held an information webinar for eligible schools on December 4, 2023 and applications are due on February 15, 2024. The notification of acceptance will be April 1, 2024. Goals and program implementation will be from April 2024 to May 2025. It is a one-year program with the option to renew for a second year.

### **3. Early Education**

The Alaska Reads Act directs DEED to establish an early education grant program – District-Wide Early Education Program (DWEED) – to provide resources to districts that are not adequately served by Head Start programs or other high-quality childcare.

DEED has created DWEED standards and 0.5 average daily membership (ADM) approval requirements. DEED has provided webinars and other outreach to share this information widely with school districts. The grant application was released on March 7, 2023. The grant awardees must provide an End of Year Report on June 30, 2024. If a district program does not yet meet the standards, they can apply for an extension.

Seven grantees were awarded the voluntary 3-year grant program for the 2023-2024 school year:

- Denali Borough School District
- Galena City School District
- Hydaburg City School District
- Iditarod Area School District
- Kake City School District
- Kuspuk School District
- Lower Kuskokwim School District

DEED received seven applications for 0.5 ADM funding for existing preschool programs. Only one application was approved, and notifications were sent out on September 1, 2023.

### **4. Distance Learning Consortium**

DEED, in cooperation with school districts, is establishing a Distance Learning Consortium to provide distance learning and professional development opportunities to students and teachers. The Alaska Distance Learning Consortium (ADLC) regulation was adopted by the board on July 26, 2023.

An element of the ADLC regulations was the establishment of a governing board; DEED recruited a seven-member governing board to represent the differing geographic and demographic viewpoints around the state. The ADLC Governing Board met for the first time in



October 2023 and will convene regularly to further develop the details of the consortium delivery model, consortium distance delivery standards, and tools and resources to support implementation statewide.

DEED has begun work with Edgepoint Learning, the DEED eLearning vendor, to develop a distance learning instructor course. This course will be designed to support educators in building their distance learning teaching strategies for successful remote delivery.

### **The Alyeska Reading Institute (ARI)**

The Alyeska Reading Institute (ARI) is a new division within DEED specifically designed to support districts and provide services for the successful implementation of the Alaska Reads Act (Chapter 40, SLA 2022).

Carol Boatman was hired as the ARI Director. DEED also hired an Administrative Officer, Microcomputer Network Specialist 1, and Head Teacher to staff ARI; additional positions are in the recruitment process.

ARI is collaborating with districts to implement high-impact tutoring, professional development, coaching, and resource provision. Services will include both adult-centered support and student-centered tutoring.

ARI has worked with the Sitka School District to implement high-impact tutoring and is in the process of integrating ARI's tutoring service with the Kodiak Island Borough School District. Other direct district support includes traveling to Kashunamiut School District and Lower Kuskokwim School District to provide in-person support in development and implementation of Individual Reading Improvement Plans (IRIPs), provide professional development, and share materials for Tier II support.

ARI provides extensive professional development and is conducting professional development sessions and coaching for twelve districts and over 180 teachers/paraprofessionals. ARI has sent over 700 University of Florida Literacy Institute (UFLI) manuals to teachers and has an asynchronous professional development course. DEED is working to build capacity within schools to utilize the opportunities provided by ARI.

## Advancing State-Education Tribal Compacting

The State Board of Education and the Department of Education and Early Development have made significant strides in the state-tribal education compact in alignment with SB 34 (Chapter 43, SLA 2022).

Compacting is a process through which the State of Alaska and an Alaskan Native Tribal entity enter into a government-to-government agreement that formally recognizes a Tribal entity's authority to operate and oversee K-12 schools. These State-Tribal Education Compact Schools (STECs) would be public schools open to all students and would offer a unique, culturally rich combination of Western and millennia-old tribal educational models.

In 2022, DEED conducted a grant Request For Application (RFA) to solicit for five State-Tribal Education Compact Demonstration Tribal Partners. Five strong applications were received. In March 2023, the State Board of Education approved partnering with the five tribes and providing a \$100,000 grant to each tribe for their participation:

- Central Council Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (CCTHITA<sup>25</sup>)
- Inupiat Community of the Arctic Slope (ICAS<sup>26</sup>)
- Ketchikan Indian Community (KIC<sup>27</sup>)
- King Island Native Community<sup>28</sup>
- Knik Tribe<sup>29</sup>

In April 2023, negotiations began between DEED and the Tribal Partners. With these negotiations, DEED and the Tribal Partners will provide a report to the legislature that will demonstrate the necessary transformation of our educational system for a fully operational State-Tribal Education Compact School Pilot Program. On December 6, the Board reviewed and approved the STEC draft report to the legislature. The Board will submit a final report containing recommendations to the legislature relating to State-Tribal education compacting no later than January 31, 2024.

On November 6, 2023, Director of Tribal Affairs Joel Isaak provided a tribal compacting update to the House Tribal Affairs Committee.

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<sup>25</sup> [CCTHITA Application \(alaska.gov\)](#)

<sup>26</sup> [ICAS Application \(alaska.gov\)](#)

<sup>27</sup> [KIC Application \(alaska.gov\)](#)

<sup>28</sup> [King Island Native Community STEC Application.pdf \(alaska.gov\)](#)

<sup>29</sup> [Knik STEC demonstration STEC Application.pdf \(alaska.gov\)](#)

## Improving Teacher Retention and Recruitment

In September 2023, DEED published the Alaska Teacher Retention and Recruitment (TRR) Playbook<sup>30</sup> with the purpose of identifying practical, professional, and policy recommendations to address Alaska’s persistent issues with teacher retention and recruitment.

The TRR Playbook is a result of the research, survey data, and action plan created by the Governor’s Teacher Retention and Recruitment Working Group, which was formed in 2020.

The TRR Playbook was created from the input of hundreds of stakeholders. The survey itself gathered information from over 4,000 current and former educators. Contributors of the final TRR Playbook included teachers, principals, superintendents, school board members, students, home school participants, special education participants, university members, and State government officials.

It is a 50-page document that describes strategies that the State and districts may use to retain and attract teachers. Sections include strengthening organizational health, working conditions, leadership, retirement, recruitment enhancement, alternative and streamlining certification, with links to sources, resources, and additional information. Information is organized both by recommendation categories and stakeholder categories.

The Board, after reviewing the final TRR Playbook, has stated its goals in implementing the provided recommendations and sharing the knowledge widely with other stakeholder groups.

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<sup>30</sup> [1-TRR Playbook 08.31.2023 - Google Docs](#)

## OTHER DEPARTMENT FUNCTIONS

### Mt. Edgecumbe High School (MEHS)

Mt. Edgecumbe High School (MEHS) in Sitka is the only State-operated residential school. The Board serves as the MEHS board. There is also a MEHS Advisory Board<sup>31</sup> comprised up of stakeholder groups, including parents, community representatives, alumni, student representative, and a representative from the State Board of Education. The 2023-2024 school year consists of 407 students from 108 different communities across Alaska.

### Alaska State Council on the Arts (ASCA)

The Alaska State Council on the Arts (ASCA) supports educators, artists, community-based organizations, and statewide partners in delivery of arts education in schools and communities. ASCA awards funding to Alaskan schools, districts, educators, and organizations in several categories. Other grants to communities also serve students through school outreach and education programs provided by Alaskan arts and culture organizations.

### The Division of Libraries, Archives, and Museums (LAM)

The Division of Libraries, Archives, and Museums (LAM) offers library and information services to state agencies and the Legislature; employs consultants who assist local libraries, archives, and museums to develop their own services and programs; operates the state museums as a service to Alaskans and the tourism industry; provides for the orderly management of current state records; and preserves state government's public records of permanent value for study and research.

Additionally, LAM provides a range of services that benefit lifelong learners and K-12 and postsecondary students. Examples are:

- The School Broadband Assistance Grant (BAG) program, authorized through AS 14.03.127 *Funding for internet services*, provides funds to help schools get up to 25 megabits per second (mbps).
- Alaska's Digital Archives shares digitized versions of more than 102,000 historical Alaskan videos, photographs, and documents with students and researchers.
- Alaska's Statewide Library Electronic Doorway (SLED) Databases and the Alaska Digital Library contain hundreds of full-text online books, magazines, newspapers, and other research resources targeted to elementary, middle school, high school, and college students' academic needs.
  - SLED provides Live Homework Help as a resource for live tutoring for students in grades four to early college, seven days a week, from 8 a.m. to 2 a.m.
- The Alaska Online With Libraries (OWL) program provides rural public libraries with high-speed internet access and Zoom capabilities to host events and meetings.

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<sup>31</sup> [Advisory Board - Mt. Edgecumbe High School \(mehs.us\)](https://mehs.us)

## Professional Teaching Practices Commission (PTPC)

The Alaska Professional Teaching Practices Commission (PTPC) governs educators' ethical and professional standards and their compliance with state law and contractual obligations. Certificate holders fund the Commission. The Commission reports by fiscal year. In FY2023, it accepted 48 cases to be investigated and sanctioned 18 educators. The number of educators sanctioned is above the yearly average of 13 sanctioned educators over the past 15 years. Sanctions may vary from warnings to suspensions and revocations of certificates. The FY2023 Annual Report<sup>32</sup> provides additional details about the Commission's actions.

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<sup>32</sup> [PTPC 2023 Annual Report.pdf \(alaska.gov\)](#)

## SCHOOL AND STUDENT DATA

### Graduation and Dropout Rates

All states are federally required to report a four-year graduation rate for cohorts of students. Alaska has reported this data since the 2010-2011 school year. A student who entered 9<sup>th</sup> grade in the 2015-2016 school year would be a member of the 2019 cohort. Cohort groups include students who transfer into an Alaska public school.

The graduation rate is calculated as the number of graduates in the cohort who receive a regular diploma by June 30, divided by the number of all students assigned to the cohort.

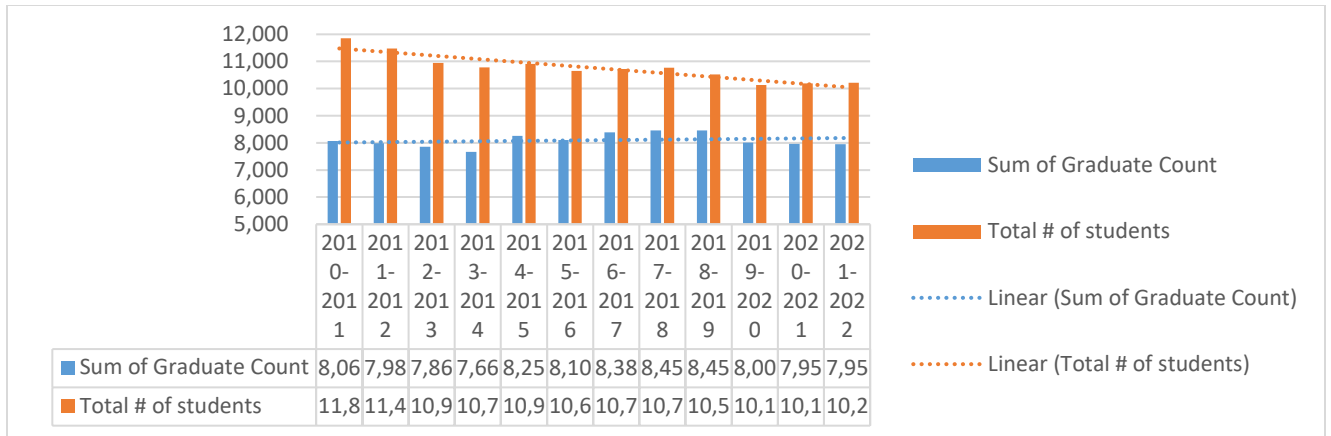
A graduate is defined as a student who has received a regular diploma from a state or district approved education program; this does not include a student who receives a certificate of achievement or Alternative High School Diploma, also known as a General Educational Development (GED<sup>33</sup>) certificate.

Graduate count is the number of students who graduated with a regular diploma during the school year (July 1-June 30). This count includes all students who graduate during the school year, regardless of cohort year.

<u>School Year</u>	<u>Graduation Rate</u>	<u>Graduate Count</u>	<u>Total # of Students</u>
2010-2011	68.00%	8,064	11,859
2011-2012	69.60%	7,989	11,478
2012-2013	71.80%	7,861	10,948
2013-2014	71.10%	7,668	10,785
2014-2015	75.6%	8,253	10,917
2015-2016	76.1%	8,108	10,654
2016-2017	78.20%	8,385	10,723
2017-2018	78.50%	8,454	10,769
2018-2019	80.40%	8,459	10,521
2019-2020	79.04%	8,008	10,132
2020-2021	78.09%	7,958	10,191
2021-2022	77.85%	7,950	10,212

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<sup>33</sup> [General Educational Development \(GED\) Testing \(alaska.gov\)](https://alaska.gov/ged-testing)



Dropout rates are calculated by taking the total number of students in grades 7-12 who drop out of public school during the school year and dividing by the October 1 enrollment count for all students in grades 7-12.

A student is **not** considered a dropout if his or her departure was due to the completion of a state- or district-approved education program; transfer to a public school, private school, or state- or district- approved education program; temporary absence caused by suspension, illness, or medical condition; or death. A student in pursuit of a General Educational Development (GED) certificate is considered a dropout, as defined by the National Center for Education Statistics. A student who drops out multiple times during a school year is only counted once in the dropout rate numerator.

<u>School Year</u>	<u>Dropout Rate</u>	<u>Dropout Count (Grades 7-12)</u>
2010-2011	4.70%	2,779
2011-2012	4.80%	2,830
2012-2013	4.00%	2,364
2013-2014	4.00%	2,303
2014-2015	3.70%	2,141
2015-2016	3.90%	2,268
2016-2017	3.50%	2,003
2017-2018	3.08%	1,784
2018-2019	3.01%	1,730
2019-2020	2.75%	1,590
2020-2021	3.11%	1,806
2021-2022	3.68%	2,164

## National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

Every two years the U.S. Department of Education, through the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), tests large samples of 4<sup>th</sup>-graders and 8<sup>th</sup>-graders in each state (plus the District of Columbia and Department of Defense schools) in reading and mathematics. The most recent NAEP results were released in 2022.

NAEP's state and nationwide results are presented as average scores on a scale of 000 to 500. The scale scores fall into four categories of achievement as defined by NAEP: advanced, proficient, basic, and below basic. Thus, NAEP also reports the percentage of students who fall within those achievement categories.

NAEP's definition of proficiency is rigorous. In NAEP, *basic* refers to partial mastery of the subject. *Proficient* refers to competency in challenging material, including knowledge, application, and analytical skills. *Advanced* is superior performance.

- In the highest-scoring state, 43% of its students scored proficient or advanced in 4<sup>th</sup>-grade reading;
- In the highest-scoring state, 42% of its students scored proficient or advanced in 8<sup>th</sup>-grade reading;
- In the highest-scoring state, 44% of its students scored proficient or advanced in 4<sup>th</sup>-grade math; and
- In the highest-scoring state, 35% of its students scored proficient or advanced in 8<sup>th</sup>-grade math.

NAEP summarizes a state's results by the number of states (plus D.C. and Department of Defense schools) it has scored *lower than*, *statistically the same as*, and *higher than*.

- In 4<sup>th</sup> grade math, Alaska scored lower than 40 states, statistically the same as 10 states, and higher than 1 state;
- In 8<sup>th</sup> grade math, Alaska scored lower than 24 states, statistically the same as 20 states, and higher than 7 states;
- In 4<sup>th</sup> grade reading, Alaska scored lower than 44 states and statistically the same as 5 state;
- In 8<sup>th</sup> grade reading, Alaska scored lower than 37 states, statistically the same as 13 states, and higher than 1 state.

The following data, comparing Alaska results to the national average, are from results released in 2022. Alaska's performance on the NAEP is poor. It is similar to the national average because that is also poor. Some states perform notably better than Alaska and the national average. DEED has cited Alaska's performance on NAEP as one indication of the need to implement higher standards in English language arts and math.



#### **4<sup>th</sup> Grade Reading NAEP Results<sup>34</sup>**

Alaska 4<sup>th</sup> grade: 51% basic or above; 24% proficient or above; 5% advanced.  
Nation 4<sup>th</sup> grade: 61% basic or above; 32% proficient or above; 8% advanced.  
Alaska's average scale score is 204. The national average is 216.

#### **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Reading NAEP Results<sup>35</sup>**

Alaska 8<sup>th</sup> grade: 63% basic or above; 26% proficient or above; 3% advanced.  
Nation 8<sup>th</sup> grade: 68% basic or above; 29% proficient or above; 3% advanced.  
Alaska's average scale score is 253. The national average is 259.

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Grade Math NAEP Results<sup>36</sup>**

Alaska 4<sup>th</sup> grade: 65% basic or above; 28% proficient or above; 5% advanced.  
Nation 4<sup>th</sup> grade: 74% basic or above; 35% proficient or above; 7% advanced.  
Alaska's average scale score is 226. The national average is 235.

#### **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Math NAEP Results<sup>37</sup>**

Alaska 8<sup>th</sup> grade: 59% basic or above; 23% proficient or above; 5% advanced.  
Nation 8<sup>th</sup> grade: 61% basic or above; 26% proficient or above; 7% advanced.  
Alaska's average scale score is 270. The national average is 273.

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<sup>34</sup> [The Nation's Report Card: 2022 Reading Snapshot Report: Alaska Grade 4](#)

<sup>35</sup> [The Nation's Report Card: 2022 Reading Snapshot Report: Alaska Grade 8](#)

<sup>36</sup> [The Nation's Report Card: 2022 Mathematics Snapshot Report: Alaska Grade 4](#)

<sup>37</sup> [The Nation's Report Card: 2022 Mathematics Snapshot Report: Alaska Grade 8](#)