

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT
ALASKA EDUCATION CHALLENGE REVIEW

December 2025



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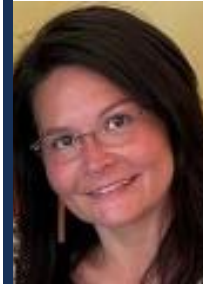
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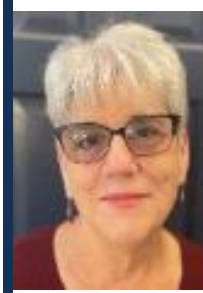
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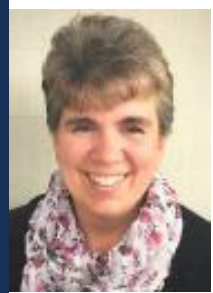
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INTRODUCTION

Review of Alaska's Education Challenge

The Alaska Education Challenge (AEC) is a statewide initiative to ensure an excellent education for every student every day. Developed through a collaborative process engaging thousands of Alaskans, educators, families, students, tribal leaders, policymakers, and community partners, the AEC identified bold strategies for long-term improvement across the state's education system.

The initiative began in 2016 when the State Board of Education and Early Development (SBOE) and Commissioner Dr. Michael Johnson identified five strategic priorities to strengthen Alaska's public schools. In January 2017, Governor Bill Walker emphasized the need for bold action in his State of the State address, leading to the formal launch of the AEC. That February, DEED conducted a statewide survey, receiving input from nearly 1,400 Alaskans representing 109 communities and more than 18,000 ideas.

In April 2017, nearly 100 Alaskans from diverse regions refined these ideas into actionable recommendations. The SBOE reviewed the proposed strategies in October and formally adopted the AEC in December 2017. The framework established five priorities to guide statewide progress:

- 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 partnerships with families, communities, and tribes.

Each priority included benchmarks for progress by 2025 and outlined strategies to guide DEED, districts, and education partners statewide. To sustain focus and accountability, the SBOE established five standing committees aligned with these priorities. Since adoption, DEED has implemented numerous initiatives consistent with the AEC, supported by legislation, targeted investments, and partnerships with districts, universities, industry, and community organizations.

In March 2025, the SBOE asked DEED to conduct a comprehensive review of the AEC to assess progress since 2017 and identify opportunities for continued improvement. Each standing committee led this review. This report brings together the committees' work to summarize Alaska's progress toward meeting the Education Challenge by 2025 and reinforces DEED's mission to provide an excellent education for every student every day.

REVIEW OF THE FIVE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Strategic Priority 1




Support ALL students to read at grade level by the end of third grade.






What Progress Looks Like by 2025





- K–3 reading measures submitted to the department will show positive trends.
- The number of students in grades 3–5 who are proficient on the statewide English language arts assessment will double.
- The number of students in grades 3–5 who are proficient on the statewide math assessment will double, since research suggests that reading ability is one of the best predictors of strong math skills.
- Student absenteeism rates will be reduced by at least 20 percent.



Prioritized Strategies from 2017

The Alaska Reads Act serves as the cornerstone for advancing the State Board of Education’s prioritized reading strategies. By establishing early literacy as a statewide priority, the Act creates the structures, resources, and accountability necessary to ensure coherence from classrooms to districts to the state. Components of this Act influence the progress of SBOE prioritized strategies.

STRATEGY FY2017	PROGRESS	RECOMMENDATION
 Prioritize early reading in all elementary schools, including K–12 schools.	The Alaska Reads Act established District Reading Improvement Plans (DRIPs) in every district, requiring focused strategies to improve K–3 literacy. The Department Reading Program (DRP) reinforces this priority by providing intensive support to the state’s lowest-performing schools.	Continue to monitor the effectiveness of the DRIP and DRP plans.
 Adopt and implement effective reading programs and materials.	Decisions on curriculum adoption remain site-based at the district level, DEED strengthens local decision-making by providing state-level vetting and guidance. In partnership with Rivet, Education, DEED launched the Alaska Vendor Guide, which highlights evidence-based instructional programs and high-dosage tutoring providers aligned with the science of reading.	Ensure the DRIP website’s Evidence-Based Resources section continues to reflect current research by highlighting vetted, evidence-based instructional programs, high-quality materials, and high-dosage tutoring providers identified through the Alaska Vendor Guide.
 Incentivize districts to adopt and implement effective curriculum and teaching strategies.	DEED advances literacy statewide by providing funding, training, and technical assistance through the Alaska Reads Act and CLSD grants, supporting districts in adopting evidence-based instructional materials. These efforts are paired with professional learning opportunities such as LETRS, Keys to Literacy, Heggerty, UFLI, and Phonics for Reading, which help teachers implement aligned strategies.	Continue leveraging Reads Act and CLSD grant funding to expand access to evidence-based curricula and sustain professional learning opportunities to support implementation of aligned strategies.

STRATEGY FY2017	PROGRESS	RECOMMENDATION
 <p>Adopt 60- or 90-minute reading blocks in grades K–3 in all districts.</p>	<p>The Reads Act emphasizes the importance of dedicated reading instructional time in grades K–3. Districts reflect this in their DRIPs. DEED provides guidance to encourage reading blocks are structured, systematic, and aligned with the science of reading.</p>	<p>Ensure K–3 reading blocks remain structured, systematic, and aligned with the science of reading through ongoing DEED guidance and district implementation reported within DRIP.</p>
 <p>Encourage district review of K–3 models, including movement through individual grades.</p>	<p>Through the DRIP process, districts are encouraged to examine their K–3 instructional models to ensure the most effective structures are in place. Coaching and technical assistance from DEED and the DRP help schools use data to adjust models for stronger student outcomes.</p>	<p>Through the DRIP process, strengthen Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) by providing coaching and technical assistance that help schools refine K–3 instructional models and use data to adjust supports to better meet student needs.</p>
 <p>Create and disseminate materials for parents and community members on how they can support the development of their children’s reading skills.</p>	<p>DEED collaborates with districts and community partners to develop family-friendly literacy resources that provide parents with practical ways to support their children’s reading at home. Materials are disseminated through the processes of individual districts and schools.</p>	<p>Expand family-friendly literacy resources and outreach to include birth–5 supports under the CLSD grant, equipping parents with practical tools to build early literacy foundations at home.</p>
 <p>Provide consistent, ongoing professional development for educators and community members on the effective use of adopted reading curricula.</p>	<p>DEED offers a robust professional learning system strengthened by the annual Alaska Science of Reading Symposium, which draws over 1,200 educators statewide. Additional training includes LETRS, Keys to Literacy, UFLI, Heggerty, mCLASS, and asynchronous courses through the Virtual Learning Consortium, ensuring educators and community partners have consistent access to training.</p>	<p>Continue prioritizing professional learning in evidence-based curriculum practices and the science of reading, expanding opportunities, both synchronous and asynchronous, for educators to earn the Alaska Reads Act endorsement and ensure consistent statewide expertise in high-quality literacy instruction.</p>
 <p>Implement effective early screeners in K-3.</p>	<p>mCLASS supports AK Reads Act screening requirement as Alaska’s statewide K–3 literacy screener. This tool provides consistent, valid, and reliable measures of early literacy development and is now used by most districts across the state.</p>	<p>Continue implementation of the K–3 literacy screener to meet AK Reads Act requirements and ensure valid, reliable measures of early literacy. DEED should maintain funding and training to ensure effective use and data-driven decision-making statewide.</p>

STRATEGY FY2017	PROGRESS	RECOMMENDATION
 <p>Train teachers on state standards and on how to align instruction to these standards.</p>	<p>DEED provides multiple professional development (PD) opportunities. PD associated with AK Reads Act is anchored in the science of reading. Reads Act educator endorsements are achieved through offered PD and ensure consistent training and instructional alignment across the state.</p>	<p>Expand professional development to utilize content specialists in explicitly aligning instruction to the standards assessed on end-of-year summative assessments, strengthening coherence between Reads Act training and measured student outcomes.</p>
 <p>Assist school leaders in using data & classroom walkthroughs to ensure implementation of aligned curricula.</p>	<p>Through the Department Reading Program, Communities of Practice for CLSD subgrantees, and state-led training, principals and school leaders receive targeted coaching in data use and instructional leadership. Walkthroughs, data review protocols, and feedback cycles strengthen strong implementation of adopted curricula.</p>	<p>Continue strengthening leadership coaching and support systems to ensure principals and school leaders use data effectively and provide feedback cycles that strengthen curriculum implementation.</p>
 <p>Use valid and reliable formative assessments to monitor students' progress.</p>	<p>mCLASS provides ongoing formative assessment data that teachers can use to adjust instruction in real time. DEED supports educators with training and resources to implement data driven instruction.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue supporting teachers in using mCLASS data to drive real-time instructional adjustments. 2. Monitor assessment waivers for their impact on student learning and the overall strength of district learning systems. 3. Provide clear guidance during the 3rd grade transition year as students move from curriculum-based measures to summative assessments, strengthening student success and long-term learning outcomes.
 <p>Identify and implement effective interventions for struggling readers.</p>	<p>The Reads Act requires that districts integrate evidence-based interventions into their DRIP / MTSS plans. Through the DRP, schools receive coaching and resources to support struggling readers, including tools like UFLI Foundations and structured literacy interventions matched to student needs.</p>	<p>Strengthen DRIP / MTSS plans by using CLSD and DRP support—through coaching, training, and resources—to provide effective, evidence-based interventions that give struggling readers the targeted help they need.</p>

STRATEGY FY2017	PROGRESS	RECOMMENDATION
 <p>Inform and train educators, parents, and community members on how to understand reading data and on how it can be used to support students in their reading skills attainment.</p>	<p>DEED provides training, guides, and dashboards to make reading data accessible and actionable. Educators, parents, and community members are supported in using this information to reinforce student learning both at school and at home. Additionally, District Reading Improvement Plans (DRIPs) and Individual Reading Improvement Plans (IRIPs) require ongoing communication between educators and parents regarding each child’s progress, ensuring families are active partners in supporting literacy development.</p>	<p>Continue strengthening family and community engagement by providing clear data tools and ensuring regular communication through DRIPs and IRIPs so families can actively support student literacy growth.</p>
 <p>Establish voluntary district reporting to the state on K–3 reading measures.</p>	<p>Districts voluntarily provide K–3 reading data through their District Reading Improvement Plans (DRIP / MTSS) and through participation in the Department Reading Program (DRP). Together, the DRIP process and the DRP program give the state valuable insight into literacy trends and progress, while respecting local flexibility.</p>	<p>Add and monitor a data section in the DRIP that includes three-year trend data from both curriculum-based measures and summative assessments, giving a clearer and more comprehensive picture of literacy progress.</p>

Data and Progress Indicators

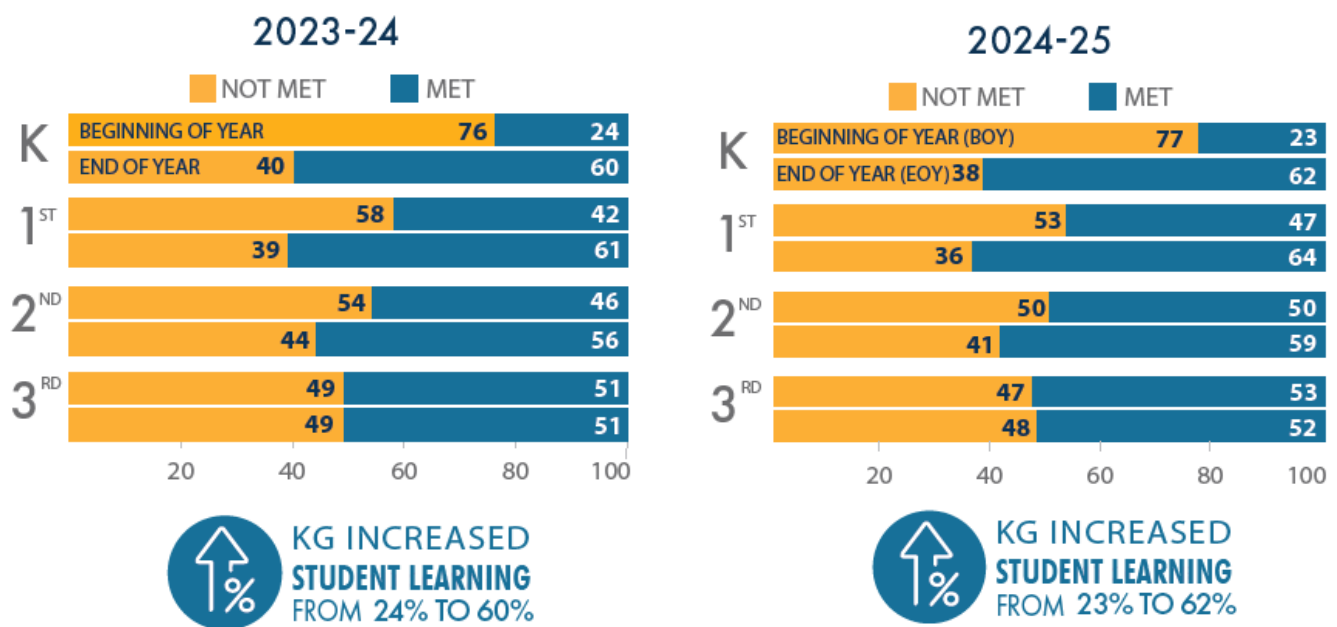
Since the Alaska Reads Act was signed into law in 2022, the state has completed two full years of implementation, with statewide screening results now available across two years of data. A key element of this work is the statewide adoption of mCLASS with DIBELS 8th Edition, now used by most districts to provide consistent, valid, and reliable K–3 literacy data. In addition, District Reading Improvement Plans (DRIPs) and Individual Reading Improvement Plans (IRIPs) ensure progress is monitored at both the system and student level, aligning curriculum, interventions, and professional development while building a foundation for long-term evaluation of outcomes. Early indicators are encouraging—more students are receiving targeted interventions, proficiency rates in the early grades are beginning to improve, and districts are expanding the use of evidence-based instructional practices. The chart below highlights statewide screening results across two years, showing movement in skill achievement across grade levels.



Amplify.

mCLASS
DIBELS 8

Alaska Grade Level Skill Achievement



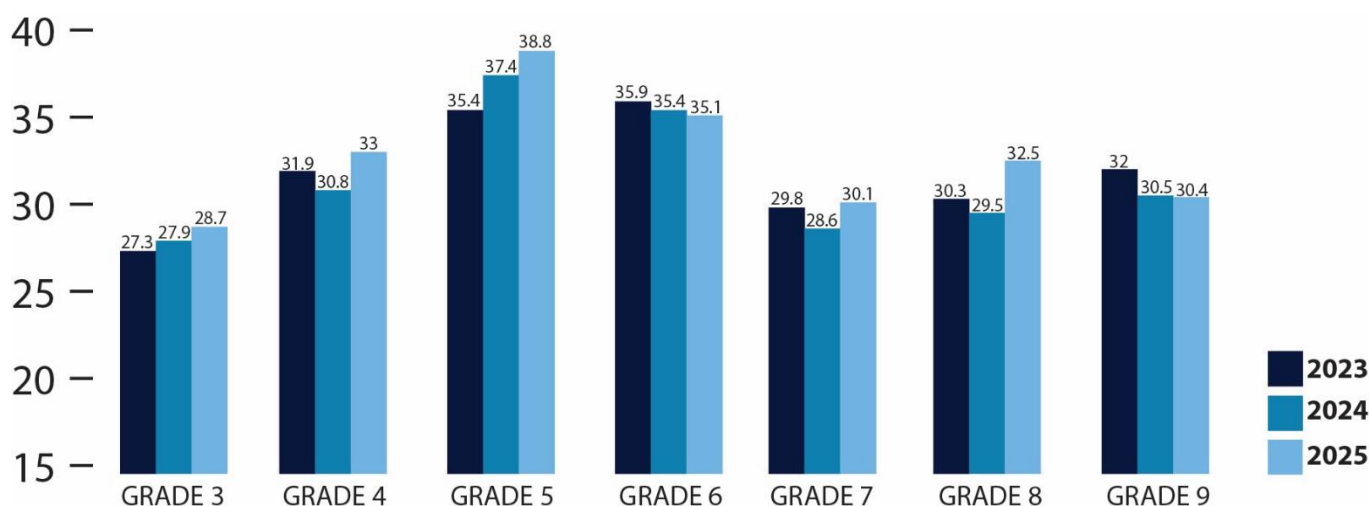
Source: Data from the mCLASS® DIBELS® 8th Edition Early Literacy Screener, Alaska and national user bases, prepared by Amplify Education, Inc., using beginning- and end-of-year results, June 2025.

Data and Progress Indicators

The Alaska System of Academic Readiness (AK STAR) provides a comprehensive measure of reading proficiency, including comprehension and higher-order literacy skills. Results now include three years of Grade 3 data: students tested in spring 2023 had not yet experienced Reads Act implementation, 2024 third graders had one year, and 2025 third graders had two years. While early results show a slight upward trend in proficiency, the increase is not yet statistically significant. Continued monitoring of AK STAR, alongside early screener data, will be critical to determine progress toward the goal of all students reading proficiently by the end of third grade.



Three-Year Trends | ELA *Percent of Students at Proficient/Advanced*



*Source: Alaska System of Academic Readiness (AK STAR)
data prepared by NWEA, using statewide summative assessment
results from Spring 2023, Spring 2024, and Spring 2025.*

Programs, Initiatives, and Investments

The Alaska Reads Act establishes a comprehensive, structured literacy program grounded in the science of reading. Its components ensure that K–3 literacy is prioritized, students who need support receive timely interventions, and families and educators work together to strengthen outcomes. These elements create a unified framework for building foundational skills, supporting educators, and sustaining long-term progress.

District Reading Improvement Plans DRIPs	A required component in every district to prioritize K–3 literacy with clear strategies, interventions, and progress reporting.
Department Reading Program DRP	Focused on the lowest-performing schools, providing intensive coaching, intervention resources, and professional learning.
Individual Reading Improvement Plans IRIPs	Ensure parents and educators collaborate to meet the needs of students not yet reading at grade level.
Early Literacy Screeners	Statewide implementation of mCLASS with DIBELS 8th Edition provides valid, reliable measures of student progress in grades K–3.
Professional Development	Professional Development: Investments in LETRS, Keys to Literacy, UFLI, Heggerty, the annual Science of Reading Symposium, and asynchronous courses through the Virtual Learning Consortium (VLC) build educator and leader capacity.
Instructional Materials & Tutoring	Partnership with Rivet Education to create the Alaska Vendor Guide, giving districts access to vetted, evidence-based programs and high-dosage tutoring providers.
Family & Community Engagement	Development of parent-friendly resources, shared through districts, schools, and statewide events, to strengthen home–school partnerships.
CLSD Grant Investments	Federal Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) funds extend Reads Act work into birth–K, elementary, and secondary literacy, ensuring alignment and sustainability.

Alaska Native Language Early Literacy

Since the adoption of Alaska’s Education Challenge in 2017, Alaska has made sustained progress in strengthening early literacy systems for students receiving instruction in Alaska Native languages. Early work focused on elevating the role of Alaska Native languages in education and recognizing the importance of language and culture in student engagement, identity, and academic success. Over time, this work evolved toward building a more coherent and aligned early literacy system that integrates

evidence-based reading practices while honoring the distinct linguistic structures and cultural contexts of Alaska Native languages.

A major milestone in this progression was the development and adoption of the Alaska Native Language Arts K–3 Literacy Standards (ANLARS)¹. These standards established consistent statewide expectations for early literacy instruction in Alaska Native languages and provided a foundation for coherent curriculum, instruction, and assessment across immersion and dual-language programs. ANLARS strengthened alignment between Alaska Native language instruction and the state’s broader early reading goals, ensuring that students learning to read in Alaska Native languages are fully included within Strategic Priority 1.

To support classroom implementation, the Department expanded statewide instructional guidance through the Alaska Native Language Literacy Guide² and the Alaska Native Language Literacy Guidebook Introduction³. These resources provide educators with clear, accessible guidance that integrates structured literacy principles with Alaska Native cultural teachings. Instructional frameworks reflect the five pillars of the science of reading while adapting instruction to the sound systems, morphology, and syntax of individual Alaska Native languages. Development of the full Alaska Native Language Literacy Guidebook continued as a parallel resource to the Alaska Reading Playbook, designed to serve as a long-term instructional and professional learning tool for immersion and dual-language programs.

As alignment deepened, schools teaching in Alaska Native languages increasingly incorporated structured literacy approaches while maintaining cultural and linguistic integrity. Instruction emphasized foundational skills such as phonological awareness, decoding, fluency, vocabulary development, and comprehension, grounded in oral language, storytelling traditions, and community knowledge. Instructional tools such as the ANLARS Worksheet supported educators in organizing curriculum around the five pillars of reading while integrating Indigenous worldviews central to Alaska Native language instruction.

Targeted coaching and professional learning further strengthened implementation. One-on-one coaching aligned to structured literacy supported educators in refining classroom practice, addressing implementation challenges, and strengthening instructional coherence. Collaboration between

¹ Alaska Native Language Arts K–3 Literacy Standards (ANLARS), Final Report

<https://sealaskaheritage.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/ANLARS-Report-Final-1.pdf>

² Alaska Native Language Literacy Guide (ANL Literacy Guide 3)

https://education.alaska.gov/akreads/2025-11-23_Guidance_ANLLiteracy%20Guide.pdf

³ Alaska Native Language Literacy Guidebook (Draft)

https://drive.google.com/file/d/197EmH_ZN1oAbmod-w6b9-gygvf2LmY3k/view

Indigenous educators and statewide literacy teams improved professional learning alignment and provided clearer insight into program needs, barriers, and effective practices across diverse district and community contexts.

Assessment alignment advanced through the Literacy Screeners for Alaska Indigenous Languages (LSAIL) project, a multi-year initiative designed to address a longstanding gap in early literacy assessment for Alaska Native language programs. The project focuses on developing and validating early literacy screeners aligned to the Alaska Reads Act and appropriate for use in Kindergarten through Grade 5. Pilot field testing expanded across immersion and bilingual programs in Yup'ik, Cup'ik, Tlingit, and Iñupiaq, supporting progress monitoring, instructional decision-making, and ongoing validation of language-specific measures. These pilots provide critical data to refine administration protocols, strengthen instructional usability, and ensure assessments reflect the linguistic structures of each language. Development of literacy screeners for additional Alaska Native languages is scheduled to begin in 2026.

Statewide coordination and collaboration strengthened alongside instructional and assessment work. The Council on Alaska Native Languages served as an important partner in advancing statewide alignment, resource sharing, and policy guidance related to Alaska Native language education. In 2023, this work expanded with the establishment of the Alaska Native Language Community of Practice, which provides a structured forum for educators, school leaders, language teachers, and community members to share resources, exchange instructional strategies, and stay informed about statewide initiatives.

During the 2024–2025 school year, the Community of Practice focused on strengthening early learning and literacy foundations, including language nests, early childhood instruction, and strategies for launching new immersion programs. In the 2025–2026 school year, participation expanded statewide, with focus areas including teaching reading to multilingual learners and exploring Indigenous mathematical knowledge. Recorded sessions increased access and extended learning beyond live participation. These efforts were complemented by the Alaska Native Language Summit, which continues to serve as a statewide convening to highlight effective practices, strengthen relationships, and align Alaska Native language instruction with statewide literacy priorities.

Together, progress from 2017 through 2025 reflects a deliberate shift toward a more inclusive, coherent, and equitable early literacy system. By aligning standards, instructional guidance, professional learning, coaching, assessment development, and statewide collaboration, Alaska has strengthened support for Alaska Native language immersion and dual-language programs while advancing the core objective of Strategic Priority 1: ensuring that all students, including those learning in Alaska Native languages, build strong foundational reading skills by the end of third grade.

Legislation, Regulations, and Board Actions

[HB 114 Alaska Reads Act](#)⁴ (Legislation – June 2022): Signed into law by Governor Mike Dunleavy, the Reads Act established a comprehensive framework to improve early literacy statewide. The Act created four components: District Reading Improvement Plans (DRIPs), Department Reading Program (DRP), Early Education Programs, and the Virtual Learning Consortium (VLC).

Regulations (SBOE Adoption – 2022–2023): The SBOE adopted regulations (4 AAC 06.400–4 AAC 06.899) that operationalize the Act, including requirements for:

- District Reading Improvement Plans (DRIPs) in every district.
- Individual Reading Improvement Plans (IRIPs) for students not reading at grade level.
- Statewide K–3 literacy screener (mCLASS with DIBELS 8th Edition) for consistent progress monitoring.
- Reading Endorsements for K–3 Teachers, Administrators, Reading Teachers, and Early Education Leads.

Board Actions in Support of Implementation:

- Approved endorsement pathways and educator preparation requirements to ensure alignment with the science of reading.
- Adopted regulations to ensure reporting and accountability measures tied to DRIPs/IRIPs.
- Supported investment in professional learning through initiatives like the Science of Reading Symposium and asynchronous VLC offerings.
- Advanced regulatory clarity for early education expansion under the Reads Act.

Ongoing Oversight and Alignment:

- SBOE reviews annual progress updates on Reads Act implementation, including screener data, professional development participation, and district reporting.
- Board actions continue to align legislation and regulation with the AEC’s priorities, ensuring sustained focus on third grade reading proficiency.




⁴ House Bill 114, *An Act relating to early education programs, reading intervention programs, and student retention; and providing for an effective date* (32nd Leg., 2nd Sess. 2022). Retrieved on October 13, 2025, from <https://www.akleg.gov/basis/Bill/Detail/32?Root=hb114>







Strategic Priority 2










Increase career, technical, and culturally relevant education to meet student and workforce needs.

What Progress Looks Like by 2025

- The number of students who, upon graduation, have earned dual credit, obtained an industry certification, or completed Advanced Placement coursework will increase by at least 15 percent.
- The overall four-year graduation rate will increase to at least 90 percent.
- The overall five-year graduation rate will increase to at least 93 percent.
- The number of students participating in CTE Programs of Study will increase by at least 20 percent.

STRATEGY FY2017	PROGRESS	RECOMMENDATION
 <p>Expand high-quality CTE courses and programs of study.</p>	<p>School districts continue to offer CTE programs of study and courses both associated with federal Perkins funding and through other district funds and programs. DEED gathers data on student participation and approved courses for Perkins reporting. DEED does not gather comprehensive CTE course and program data for “non-Perkins” CTE. During the 2024-2025 school year, fourteen CTE Program of Study development grants were awarded to school districts to establish or strengthen existing programs in high demand sectors.</p>	<p>Could DEED dedicate resources to gather data on broader CTE programming offered by school districts beyond Perkins?</p>
 <p>Foster collaboration between districts to create innovative and relevant experiences for students.</p>	<p>DEED supports two annual statewide CTE conferences for school districts and post-secondary partners to collaborate, set priorities, and share successful practices. Since 2022, professional development grants have been provided to incentivize district participation. Since 2022, board members have participated in these statewide conferences. In 2017 and 2023, DEED provided two rounds of District Collaboration Grants to assist districts in start-up logistics of multi-district efforts. Bristol Bay Regional CTE Program has become an exemplar with four districts collaborating to provide robust CTE options. Other collaborative programs include NACTEC, Kusilvak Academy, EXCEL Alaska, etc.</p>	 <p>Continue</p>

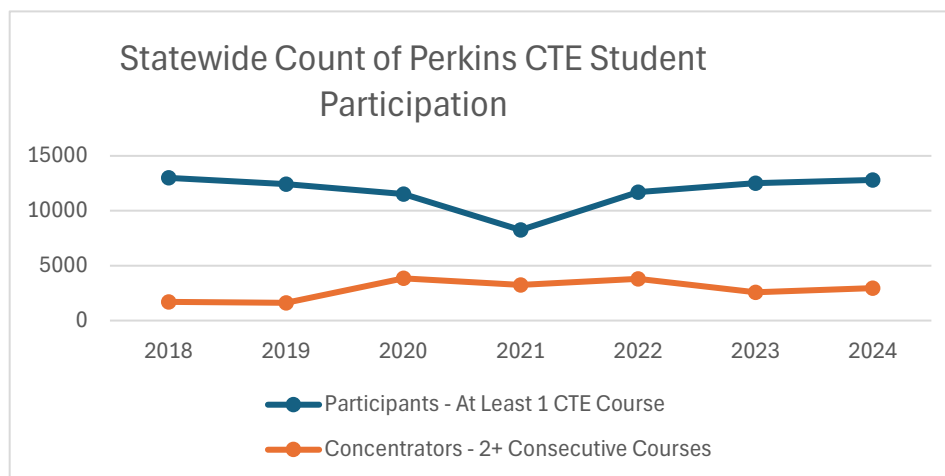
STRATEGY FY2017	PROGRESS	RECOMMENDATION
 <p>Provide induction programs for educators new to Alaska and/or the profession.</p>	<p>DEED has not taken statewide action specific to CTE educators on this strategic priority. Professional Development grants are provided annually to school districts and training partners earmarked for technical training and development of CTE instructors in school districts.</p>	 <p>Reevaluate these strategies within the broader priority.</p>
 <p>Reimagine Alaska studies and multicultural curriculum requirements through the lens of cultural literacy.</p>	<p>DEED has not taken statewide action on this strategy linked to this priority. The Committee addressed this issue briefly in 2024 to clarify whether it was appropriate under this strategic priority.</p>	
 <p>Establish partnerships among local industry, districts, and the state</p>	<p>DEED continues to support partnerships by convening two statewide annual CTE conferences, recognizing best practices through the annual SBOE CTE recognition awards, leading the multi-district and partner Career Advising demonstration project, and partnering with Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, University of Alaska system, and industry partners on the Alaska Workforce Future Plan.</p>	
 <p>Create opportunities for local talent to engage with students.</p>	<p>DEED has not taken statewide action on this strategic priority. DEED continues to provide flexibility in the Perkins application process and support local school districts as they include local talent and opportunities in offered programs.</p>	
 <p>Promote dialogue among local and state partners to increase opportunities for students.</p>	<p>DEED supports two annual statewide CTE conferences for school districts and post-secondary partners to collaborate, set priorities, and share successful practices.</p>	

STRATEGY FY2017	PROGRESS	RECOMMENDATION
 <p>Increase awareness of the positive benefits of CTE for student engagement and academic success.</p>	<p>The subcommittee established the annual CTE Recognition Awards. Fourteen programs have been recognized formally by the SBOE since 2023.</p>	 <p>Continue</p>
 <p>Encourage community involvement in CTE program development.</p>	<p>DEED has focused additional resources to Alaska's six CTE Student Organizations. In addition to continued federal funding, since 2022 state funds have been provided to develop statewide leadership and student opportunities since COVID interruptions.</p>	<p>Continue</p>
 <p>Advance CTE educator professional development through partnerships and collaboration.</p>	<p>Professional Development grants are provided annually to school districts and training partners earmarked for technical training and development of CTE instructors in school districts.</p>	 <p>Reevaluate the opportunities for partnerships and collaboration for this strategy moving forward.</p>
 <p>Support district exploration of diverse high school models such as distance delivery education in high school and access to off-site opportunities such as regional high schools, career and technical schools, and supported intern programs.</p>	<p>DEED has encouraged cross-district collaboration through two rounds of small grants designed to help fund the logistics of multi-district collaboration. While efforts during the interruptions of the COVID pandemic emphasized remote delivery of CTE programming, no platform currently exists that can deliver content broadly across districts. Cross district collaboration is accomplished passively through two annual convenings of district CTE staff.</p>	 <p>Gather broad CTE program data of current school district CTE courses and programs to better understand and communicate potential collaboration.</p>
 <p>Provide industry more opportunities for input in career pathway curriculum.</p>	<p>Alaska Department of Labor & Workforce Development has recently developed <i>Alaska's Workforce Future</i> (March 2025) in partnership with statewide industry representatives.</p>	 <p>Evaluate how DEED can integrate and engage through the workforce plan.</p>

Data and Progress Indicators

Student Participation | *Perkins CTE Programs*

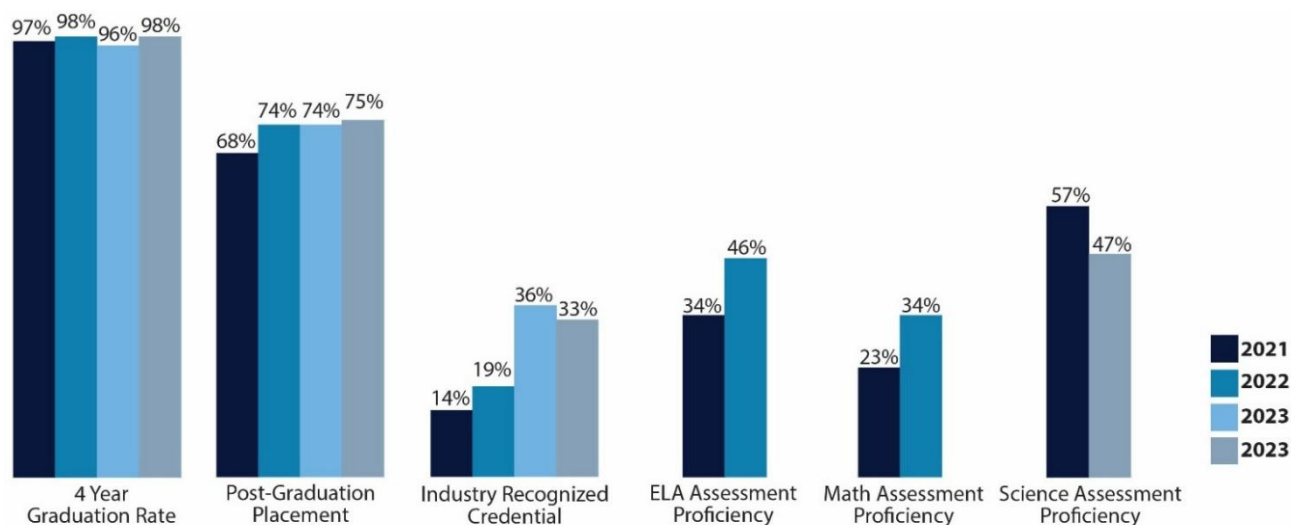
School districts report student participation statistics, register courses, and identify career clusters Perkins programs are serving. These data reflect only students, courses, and programs funded through federal Perkins funds. In most cases, school districts are using their own general funds and support from other sources to provide additional CTE programming that is not reflected in these statistics.



Student Outcomes | *Perkins CTE Programs*

School districts report student outcomes for graduating seniors that “concentrated” in Perkins CTE programs during high school. A Perkins Concentrator is a student who has completed at least two technical courses in a single approved CTE program of study. Again, these data reflect only students, courses, and programs funded through federal Perkins funds. In most cases, school districts are using their own general funds and support from other sources to provide CTE programming that is not reflected in these statistics.

Outcomes for Alaska High School Seniors who “Concentrated” in a Perkins CTE Program



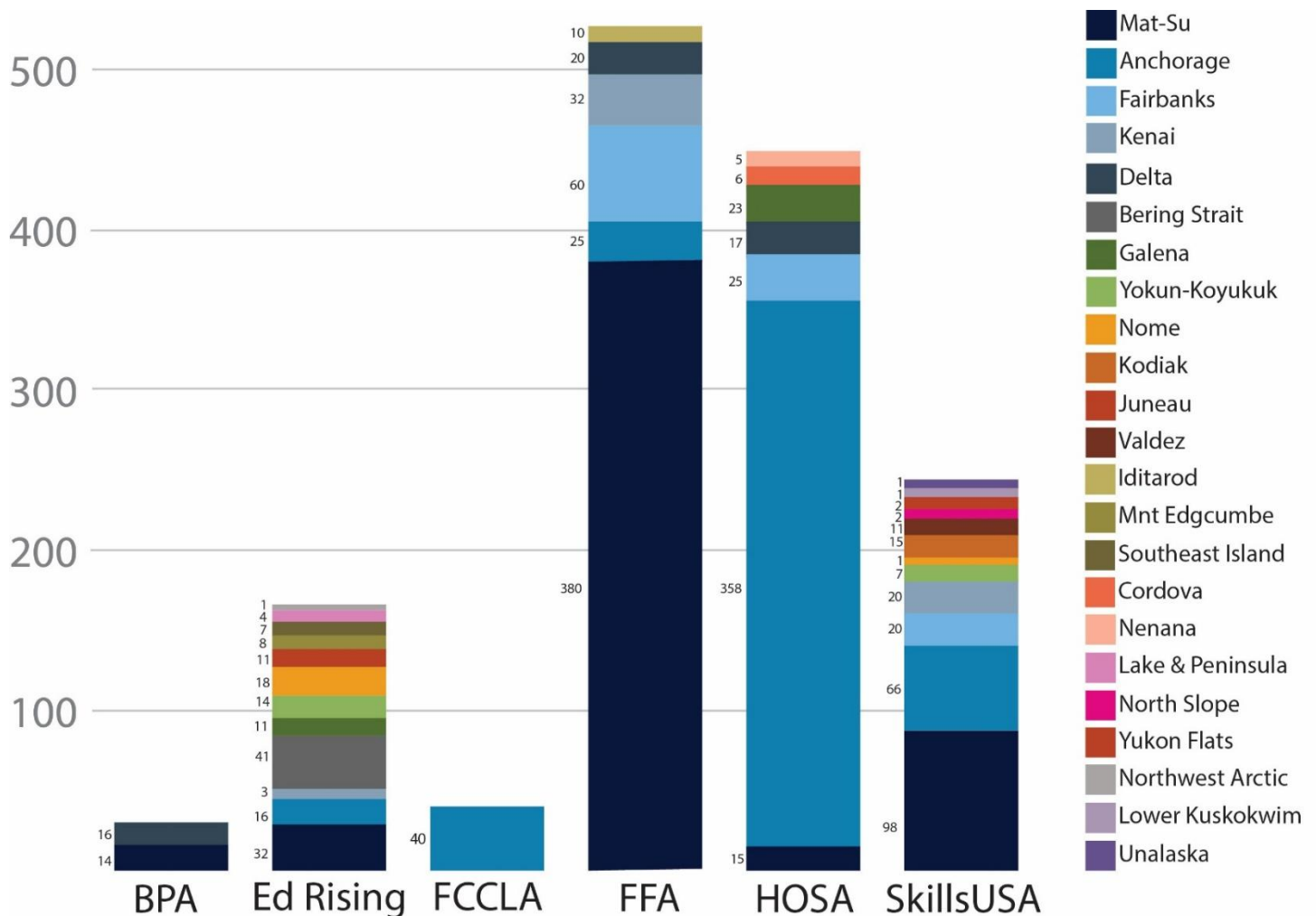
Source: Performance data for Alaska Perkins students reported to US Department of Education annually through the federal Consolidated Administration Reporting portal.

Programs, Initiatives, and Investments

Career and Technical Student Organizations

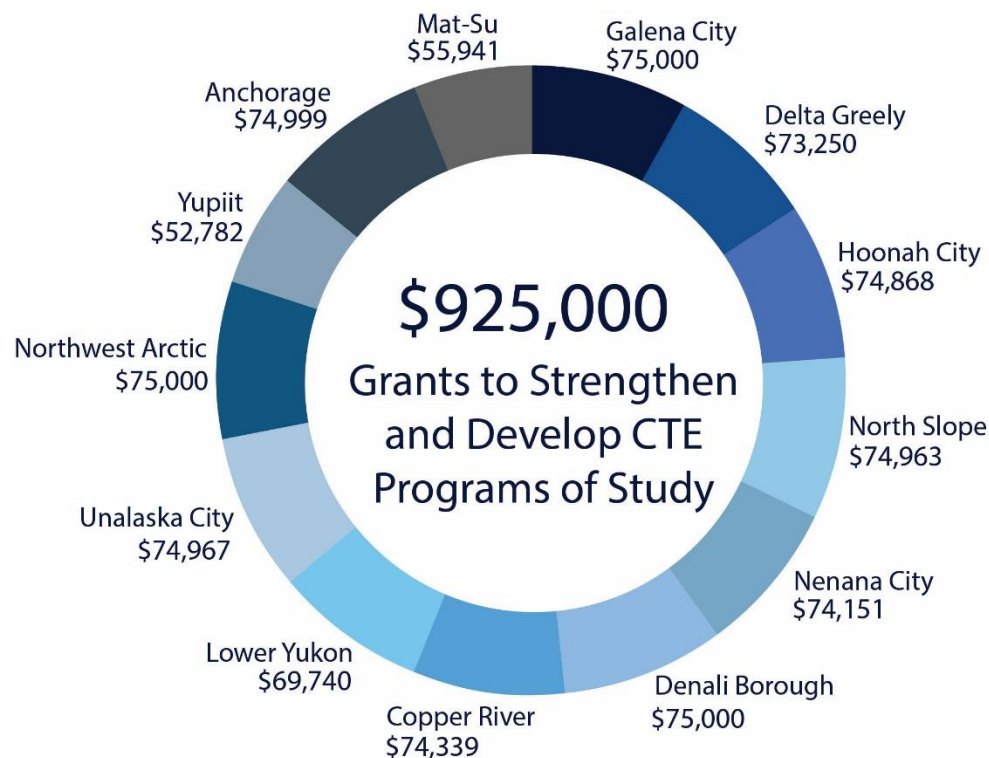
DEED supports Alaska's six Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs) with federal Perkins funds and, since 2023, with annual state funds. Alaska's six CTSOs are: Business Professionals of America (BPA); Educators Rising; Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA); Future Farmers of America (FFA); Future Health Professionals (HOSA); and SkillsUSA. Prior to 2023, statewide CTSOs were coordinated and supported through a 3rd party contracted State Director. The COVID pandemic interrupted CTSO participation, conferences, and leadership and DEED has focused additional resources toward CTSOs focused on building back student and district engagement and strengthening state level leadership for each CTSO. Since 2023, state level coordinating responsibilities have been taken on by DEED staff.

2025 Student Participation in CTSOs by District



CTE Program of Study | *Grants in 2023*

DEED awarded Grants to Strengthen and Develop CTE Programs of Study in February 2024 to thirteen district applicants. The response and interest in these grant funds were tremendous as DEED received a total of twenty-two applications. Grants were funded from an expanded pool of \$925,000 making more awards possible than expected.



Career Guide Demonstration Project

The Career Guide Project is a collaborative initiative between DEED, the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD), the Bristol Bay Regional CTE Consortium (BBRCCTE), Sealaska Heritage Institute, and rootEd Alliance. The project is designed to reach rural and remote students who often lack access to career guidance. Trained Career Guides provide postsecondary planning, expose students to training and career pathways, and support vocational, college, and military applications, as well as financial planning, including FAFSA. This work connects students to industry opportunities while grounding the initiative in Alaska's cultural and regional needs.

This initiative aligns directly with [*Alaska's Workforce Future*](#)⁵ (March 2025), which outlines strategic goals including boosting career awareness and pathways, strengthening training programs (CTE, apprenticeships), and enhancing mentorship and career planning. In particular, the Workforce Future plan identifies the need to scale up career guidance and supports that help match students' education with the workforce needs of their regions, a core aim of the Career Guide Project.

⁵ Alaska Workforce Investment Board. *Alaska Workforce Future: A Shared Plan for Alaska's Workforce System*. (February 2025). Retrieved on October 17, 2025, from https://awib.alaska.gov/documents/25SAFE005_AWF_Document-Digital-Final.pdf

Legislation, Regulations, and Board Actions

Alaska Performance Scholarship | CTE Eligibility















In June 2024, the Governor signed [HB 148](#)⁶ which included key legislation aimed to improve access to and utilization of the Alaska Performance Scholarship. This legislation enacted several changes impacting eligibility criteria for the Class of 2024 and beyond, as well as some changes that may impact continuing students. One option for scholarship qualification now includes CTE courses “1 year of which includes 2 semesters of sequentially more rigorous content within a career cluster.”

See <https://acpe.alaska.gov/Funding-Solutions/Alaska-Performance-Scholarship>

CTE Program | Recognition Awards

Starting in 2023, the SBOE CTE Committee annually calls for nominations for CTE Program Recognition Awards in the areas of Quality Work-Based Learning and/or Supporting Student Engagement. This recognition program highlights the outstanding achievements of CTE programs around the state that exemplify the ideal qualities of CTE. The full Board formally approves awardees each June as part of the annual recognition cycle. A Board CTE Committee member is present at the annual Alaska ACTE Professional Development Conference in Anchorage each Fall, where awardees are recognized.

Alaska SBOE Career & Technical Education Program Recognition Awards

2023	2024	2025
 Minto School & Scott Brucker <i>Hydroponics Growing Proj.</i>	 Lower Yukon S.D <i>Kusilvak Career Acad.</i>	 Wayne McManus & Michael Sturm Kenai Peninsula S.D <i>Razdolna School Welding</i>
 Delta Greely School District <i>Boat Building Program</i>	 Paul Saltzman & Lower Kuskokwim S.D <i>Engineering Pathway</i>	 Mat-Su S.D <i>Housing Build Project</i>
 Alaska Resource Education <i>POWR Camp</i>	 Madeline Tulik & Nathaniel Betz Coastal Villages Regional <i>Youth to Work Program</i>	 Alaska Resource Education <i>POWR Camp</i>
 Annette Island S.D <i>SCUBA Program</i>	 Alaska Transition Outcomes <i>SERRC Alaska's Ed. Resource Center</i>	 Aaron Schmidt Skagway School District <i>Skagway School Woodshop</i>
 Bristol Bay Region CTE <i>Fisheries Program</i>	 Anthony Cavan Yukon-Koyukuk S.D <i>Welding Pathway</i>	

⁶ House Bill 148, *An Act relating to the Alaska Performance Scholarship; and providing for an effective date* (33rd Leg., 2nd Sess. 2024). Retrieved on October 13, 2025, from <https://www.akleg.gov/basis/Bill/Detail/33?Root=hb148>

Potential Recommendations

Industry Engagement

Expand and formalize industry partnerships to support the growth and relevance of CTE programs.

Establish regular opportunities for industry input on curriculum design and pathway development.

Best Practices and Barriers

Identify and highlight effective practices that can be replicated across districts.

Document barriers to expansion—including instructional capacity, housing availability, competitive salaries, and rural program delivery—to inform policy discussions and resource decisions.

Explore incentives and supports to retain qualified CTE instructors, especially in high-demand fields.

Promote the expansion of CTE Student Organizations to serve more districts and ensure access in rural districts and schools.

Systemwide Understanding

Develop a comprehensive statewide picture of CTE offerings, financial investments, partnerships, and consortium activity.

Ensure alignment of the Alaska Workforce Future Plan with SBOE's strategic direction to create coherence across state initiatives.

Emphasize a long-term view of workforce development through analysis of Alaska's future workforce need and promoting career preparation with middle and elementary school students.

Data and Progress Tracking

Align each trajectory statement with measurable progress data to monitor outcomes.

Provide clear reporting on graduation rates, CTE participation, dual credit, industry certifications, and other key indicators.







Strategic Priority 3

Close the achievement gap by ensuring equitable educational rigor and resources.







What Progress Looks Like by 2025





- The current performance gaps in English language arts and math for all student subgroups will be reduced by at least 45 percent.
- The current gaps in graduation rates for all student subgroups will be reduced by at least 50 percent.
- The proficiency rate for English learner students will increase to at least 65 percent.
- The number of students in each subgroup who are required to take remedial classes upon entering college will be reduced by at least 50 percent.

Prioritized Strategies from 2017

STRATEGY FY2017	PROGRESS	RECOMMENDATION
 <p>Provide evidence-based strategies and resources for teachers on implementing standards-aligned and student-centered instruction and curricula for preschool through grade 12.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content Specialists in ELA, Social Studies, Math, Science. • Update standards in Social Studies . • Alaska Reads act for pre-k through grade three. • Reading newsletters with resources. • Science of Reading Training for educators • Literacy Screener for all k-5 students statewide. • Creating an indigenous language literacy screener. 	 <p>Continue work on creating and distributing evidence-based strategies and materials.</p>
 <p>Institute instructional models that promote deeper hands-on learning (Ex: CTE/ STEM).</p>	<p>English Language Arts and Math content specialists are developing a variety of materials in different modalities to support all learners.</p>	 <p>Reevaluate these strategies within the broader priority.</p>
 <p>Implement supportive strategies that boost attendance for all students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and Safety Team implemented the “Strive for 5- Attend School All Week” to address Chronic Absenteeism https://education.alaska.gov/attendance • COVID-19 funds were used to begin statewide Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports programs in districts. The program has grown to include 14 districts and 46 schools. 	 <p>Continue work on building awareness and provide support to districts to promote attendance.</p>

STRATEGY FY2017	PROGRESS	RECOMMENDATION
 <p>Provide flexibility in school calendars, traditional school structure, and length of the year.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued support for new charter schools. Applied for federal charter school grant to support new charter schools and update state charter school policies at the state level. 	 <p>Continue to support the creation of calendars adhering to statutory requirements/meet needs of districts.</p>
 <p>Facilitate access to high-quality instructional materials and learning experiences for all students, PK-12th Grade.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilized COVID-19 funds to fund ELA curriculum for select districts through a materials review process with participating districts. DEED was awarded the Comprehensive Literacy State Development Grant to promote literacy in birth to grade 12. Created a School Support Team to work collaboratively to support districts in standards- and evidence-based instructional practices. 	 <p>Continue work developing and distributing materials/supporting schools and district in best practices.</p>
 <p>Expand the use of culturally appropriate methods, technologies, and measures for identifying success, mitigating underperformance, and accelerating student learning.</p>	<p>Collaborated on Tribal Compacting and the development of bills to enable tribes to have governance of their schools. The pilot program included 5 tribes.</p>	 <p>Continue work on developing relationships and support culturally appropriate strategies to support students.</p>
 <p>Engage in regular consultation with stakeholders who represent the full range of cultures, languages, geographical locations, abilities, interests, and goals of our students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New positions- Tribal Liaison, and supporting staff. Contract with Joel Isaak to work on Tribal Compacting work for FY 2025 and FY2026 with the possibility of extending the contract to future years. 	<p>Continue work on developing relationships and support culturally appropriate strategies to support students.</p>
 <p>Establish legislation for a tribal compacting and/or charting compact that outlines the authority, accountability, and fiscal responsibility of the tribal entities and Alaska to carry out agreed-upon educational services for K–12 students.</p>	<p>House Bill 59 <i>State-Tribal Education Compacts</i> Senate Bill 66 <i>State-Tribal Education Compacts</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The intent of the legislation is for the legislature to reevaluate the establishment of demonstration state-tribal education compacts with participating tribes. It outlines the authorization and operation of State-tribal Education Compact Schools. 	 <p>Continue work to build strong State-Tribal Education Compacts.</p>

STRATEGY FY2017	PROGRESS	RECOMMENDATION
 <p>Align school improvement, accountability, and standards.</p>	<p><u>The System for School Success</u> includes several indicators that align with the State’s approved plan that aligns to the federal Every Student Succeeds Act. Indicators include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Math English Language Arts (ELA) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Academic Achievement 25% ○ Academic Growth 40% • English Learner Progress 12.5% • Chronic Absenteeism 10% • Grade 3 ELA 2.5% • Graduation Rate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Four Year 7.5% ○ Five Year 2.5% <p>Each school is evaluated & given a school designation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Comprehensive Support and Intervention</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Based on performance of all students in school ○ Lowest 5 percent ○ Graduation Rate ○ Grants & additional state support are provided • <i>Targeted Support and Intervention</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Based on the performance of each subgroup on the indicators listed above ○ Grants and additional state support are provided • <i>Universal Support and Intervention</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Schools in this designation are not identified for additional interventions 	 <p>Continue to support designated schools to build capacity and improve student outcomes.</p>
 <p>Align instruction, curriculum, standards, student success expectations, and assessments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alaska Native Language Arts K-3 Literacy Standards (ANLA K-3) adoption. • Creating a guide to support districts in implementing the ANLA K-3 Literacy Standards. • Creating an indigenous Language Literacy Screener. • WIDA ACCESS for ELLs. • Adopted standards and assessment for all English Learner as well as an alternate assessment for English learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities. 	 <p>Continue aligning instruction, curriculum, standards, and assessments to ensure coherence and consistency across all grade levels and student groups.</p>
 <p>Reconsider current education funding connected to seat time; redefine instruction and hour.</p>	<p>This strategy is outside the scope of DEED’s current authority. Implementation would require changes to existing statutes and regulations governing instructional hours and funding based on seat time.</p>	 <p>Reevaluate this strategy within the broader priority.</p>

STRATEGY FY2017	PROGRESS	RECOMMENDATION
 <p>Promote cross-district partnerships and sharing of resources, such as courses, materials, professional development, guidance documents, and forms.</p>	<p>The BBRCTE Consortium is a best practice example of districts sharing resources to expand access to high-quality CTE programs. Through collaboration among Southwest Region, Lake and Peninsula, Bristol Bay, and Dillingham school districts, students benefit from coordinated programming, shared staff, and regional training opportunities.</p>	 <p>Continue to highlight best practices like the BBRCTE Consortium and create opportunities for districts to collaborate and share resources to expand access to high-quality instructional programs, including CTE.</p>
 <p>Fund correspondence students at the same level as non-correspondence students.</p>	<p>Several Bills addressed increasing the Base Student Allocation for correspondence schools from 90 percent to 100 percent full time equivalent student based on the October student count period. House Bill 76 House Bill 204 Senate Bill 82 Senate Bill 182</p>	 <p>Continue work to build strong State-Tribal Education Compacts.</p>

Assessment Rate Data

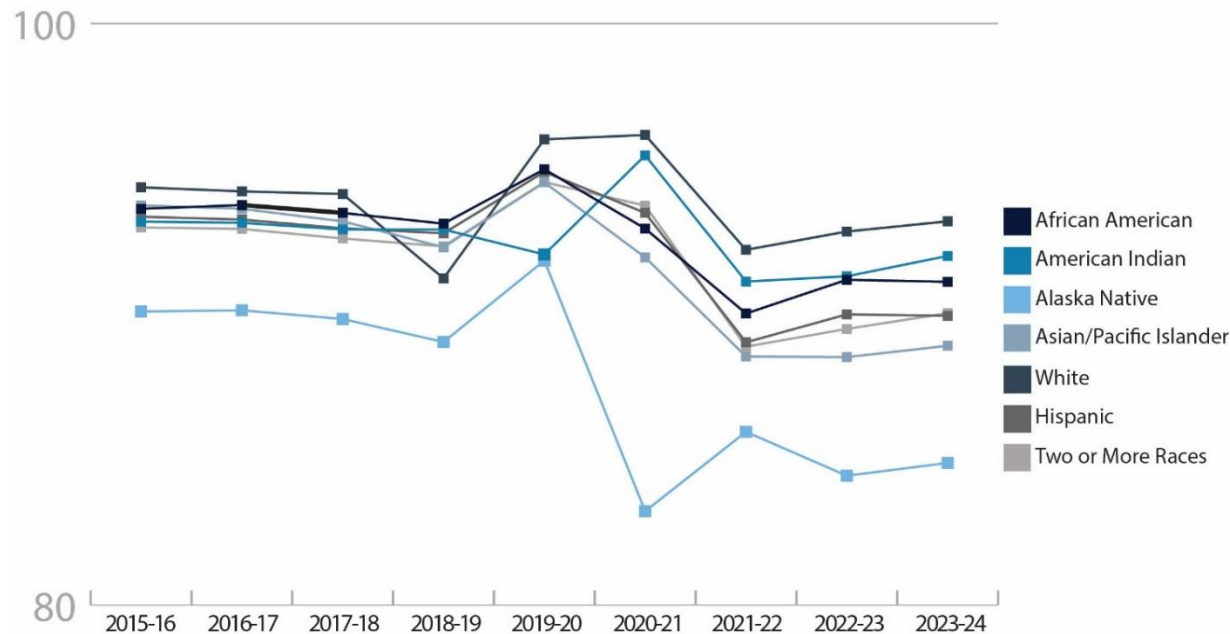
Attendance rates serve as a key indicator of student engagement and school climate across Alaska’s public schools. Consistent attendance is closely linked to academic achievement and graduation outcomes, making it an important measure in understanding equity and access within the education system. The data below summarize statewide attendance trends over nine academic years, disaggregated by student subgroup. These figures reflect both pre- and post-pandemic periods, offering insight into how attendance patterns have shifted and where disparities remain among different populations.

The Department has also led a statewide attendance initiative, Strive for Five, which encourages students to attend school all week and builds community awareness of the importance of regular attendance. This work is emphasized within Strategic Priority #5, focusing on improving student safety and well-being through strong partnerships with families, communities, and tribes.

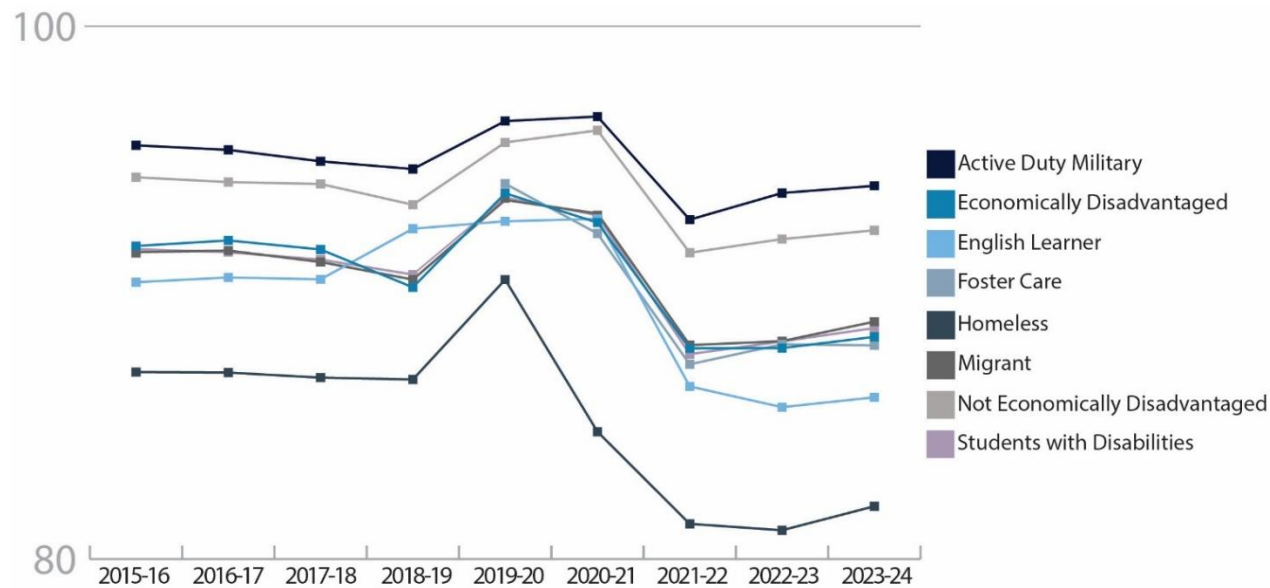
Attendance Rate Data

The statewide attendance rate for all students remained relatively stable between 2015 and 2020, averaging around 93 to 94 percent before the pandemic. A sharp decline occurred in 2021–2022, reflecting the lingering effects of COVID-19 disruptions and related attendance challenges. Although rates have shown slight improvement in the two most recent years, they remain below pre-pandemic levels. The data also reveal that Alaska Native and American Indian students, along with economically disadvantaged students, experienced greater drops in attendance and have maintained lower rates compared to the statewide average.

Attendance Rate | Race & Ethnicity



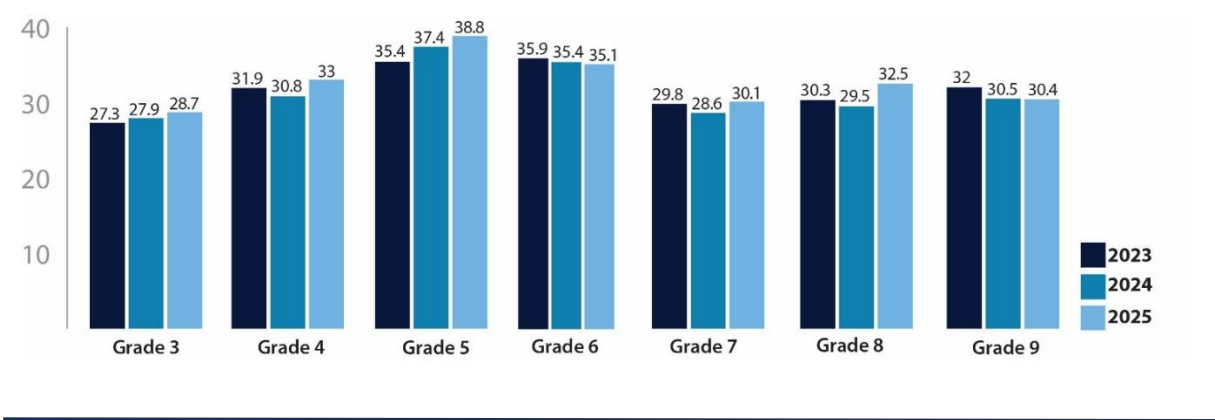
Attendance Rate | Student Program/Support Status



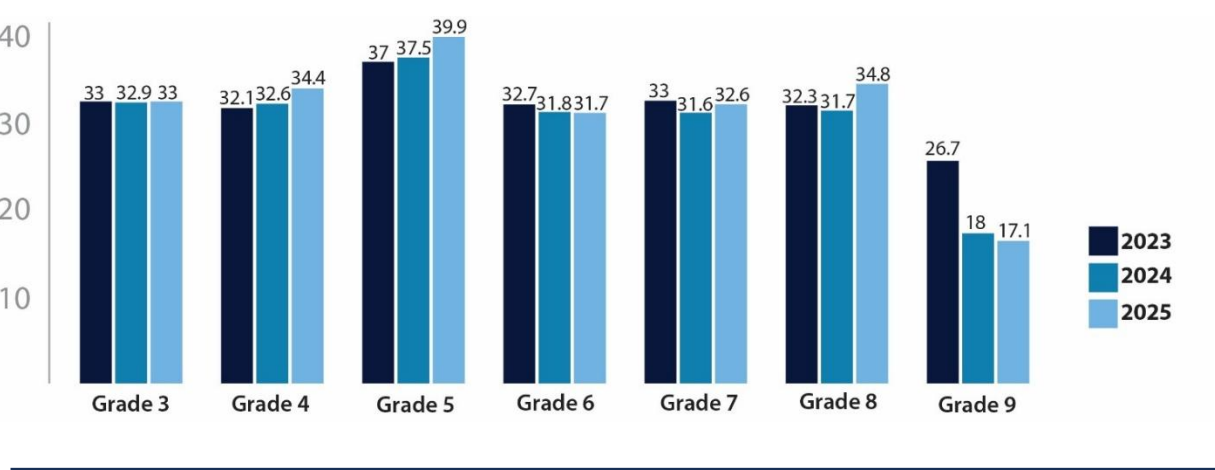
State-wide Assessment Data

The following charts present statewide proficiency trends over a three-year period in English Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics, and Science, as measured by the Alaska System of Academic Readiness (AK STAR). These data provide an overview of student performance across core content areas and serve as one indicator of progress toward Alaska’s educational priorities.

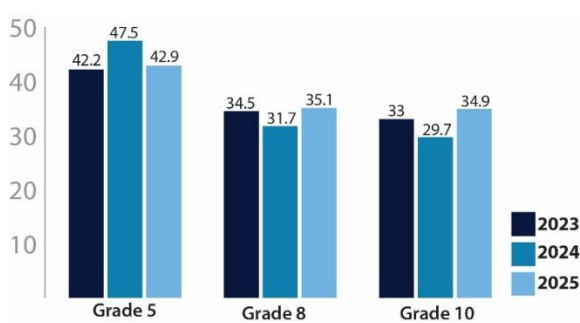
Three-Year Trend | ELA | Percent of Students at Proficient/Advanced



Three-Year Trend | Math | Percent of Students at Proficient/Advanced



Three-Year Trend | Science | Percent of Students at Proficient/Advanced

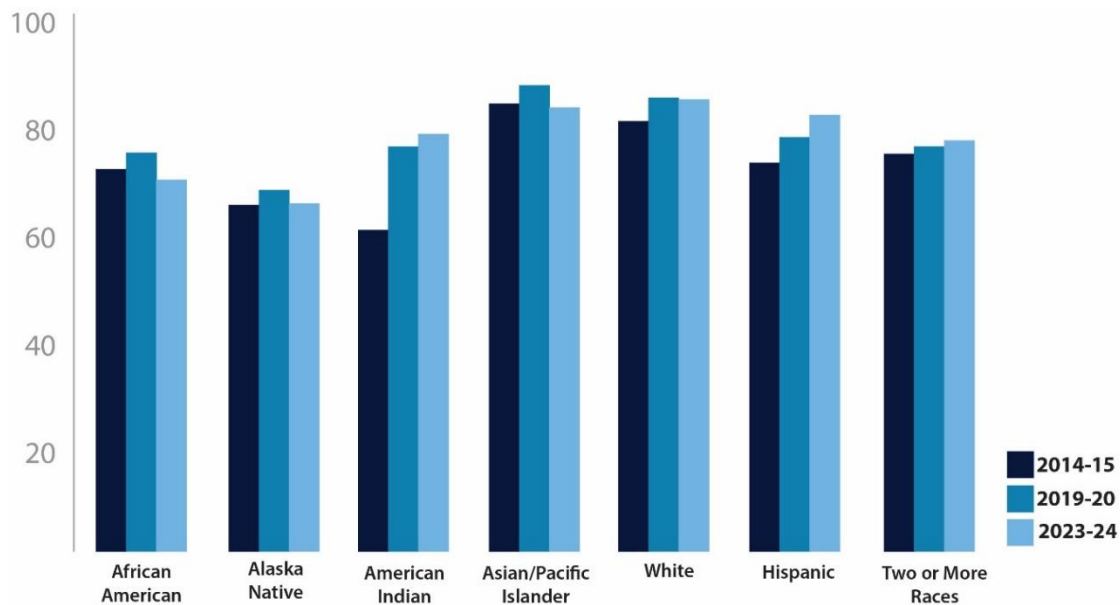


Graduation Rate Data

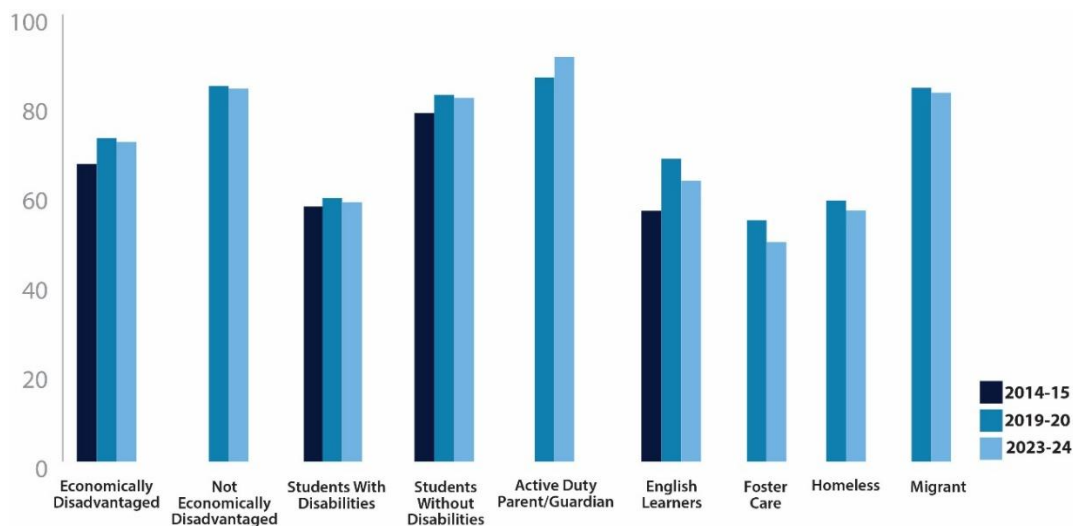
Graduation rates provide an important measure of how effectively Alaska's education system supports students in completing high school within the expected timeframe. The charts below present statewide four-year and five-year cohort graduation rates for selected student groups from 2014–2015, 2019–2020, and 2023–2024.

The four-year cohort graph shows the percentage of students graduating on time, while the five-year cohort graph includes students who required an additional year to complete their diploma. Tracking both measures offers a broader view of student persistence and completion across demographic groups. These data help the Department and districts understand progress toward ensuring that every student has the opportunity to graduate prepared for postsecondary education, employment, and community engagement.

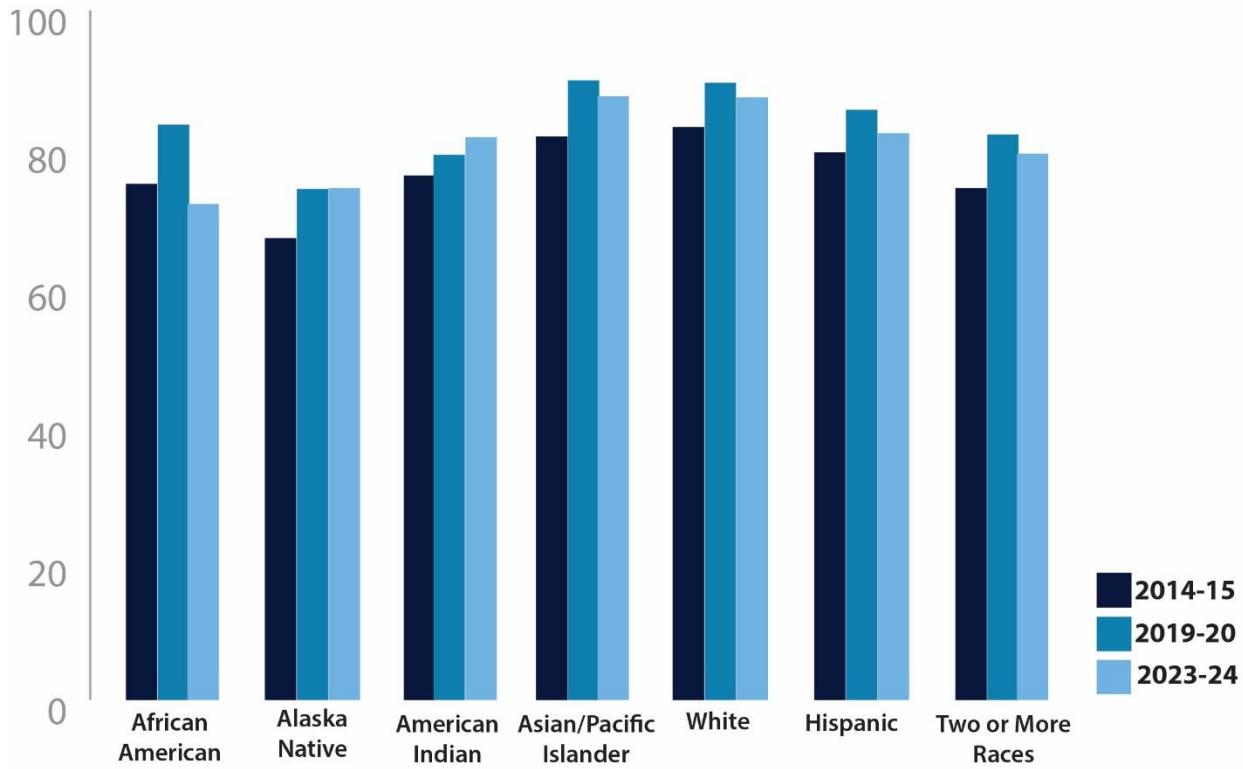
Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rate | Race & Ethnicity



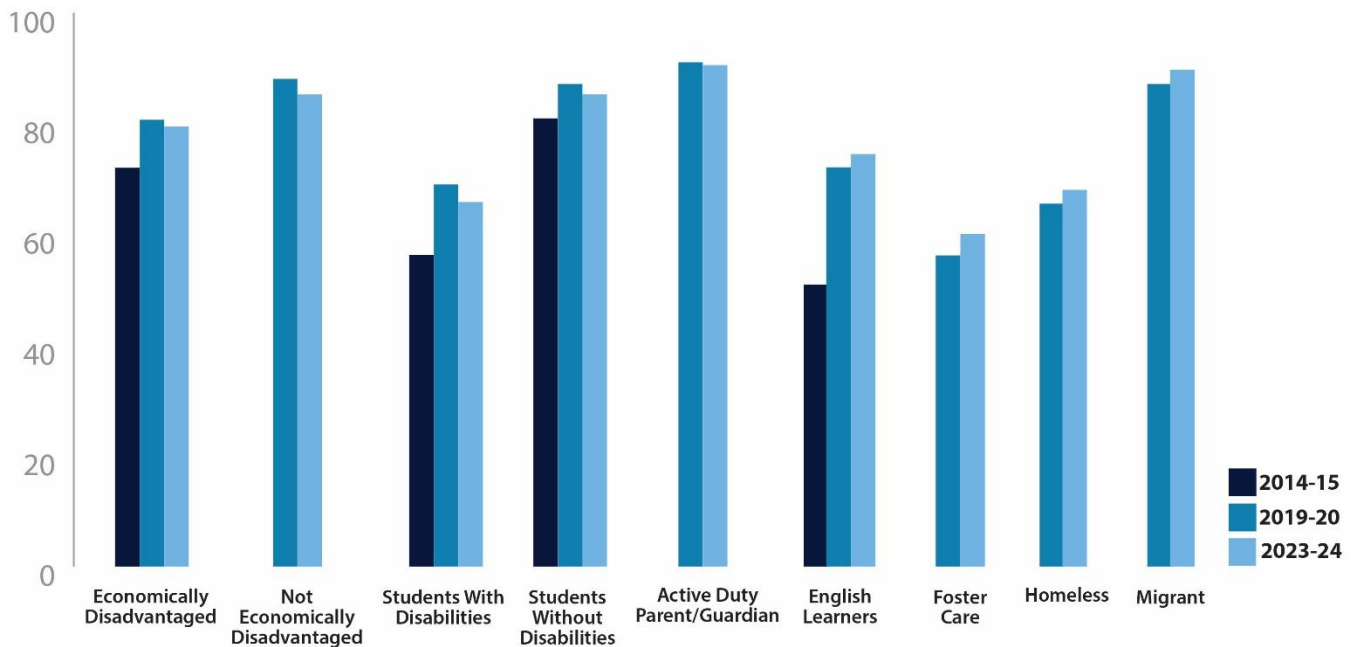
Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rate | Student Program/Support Status



Five-Year Cohort Graduation Rate | *Race & Ethnicity*



Five-Year Cohort Graduation Rate | *Student Program/Support Status*

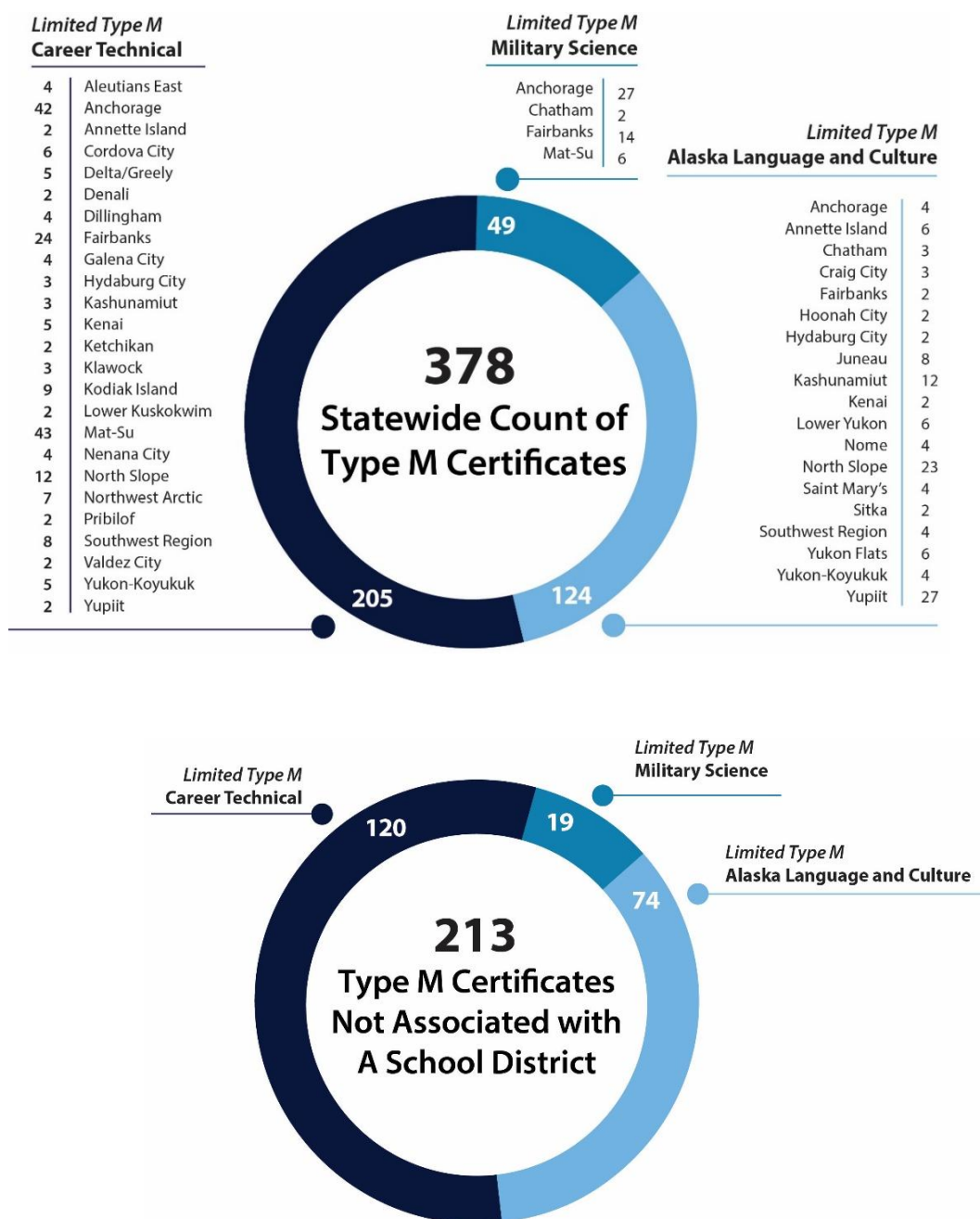


Type M Teaching Certificates

Type M teaching certificates are district-sponsored credentials granted by DEED under 4 AAC 12.370 and 4 AAC 12.372. These certificates may be issued in specific areas such as Alaska Native language and culture, CTE, and military science.

A local school board may request the issuance of a Type M certificate for an individual who demonstrates subject matter expertise and the ability to teach effectively in the area identified by the district. The certificate is limited to the requesting district and remains valid only while the individual is employed by that district.

The graphs below summarize statewide counts of Type M certificates by category and district, as reported through the Certified Staff Accounting Data Collection.



Programs, Initiatives, and Investments

State–Tribal Education Compacting (STEC) Initiative

Based on direction from the SBOE, the Department has advanced the development of State–Tribal Education Compacts (STEC) as a framework to strengthen local control and community ownership of education in Alaska. This initiative supports Tribal self-governance while maintaining the State’s constitutional responsibility to provide public education for every student.

Under this model, Tribes may operate Tribally Compacted Public Schools (TCPS) through government-to-government agreements with the State. The Department provides oversight through the SBOE, ensuring accountability in finance, reporting, and student outcomes while enabling Tribes to design culturally grounded educational programs that meet state standards.

The STEC framework was developed collaboratively with five Tribal partners, the Alaska Federation of Natives, the Association of Alaska School Boards (AASB), and other education stakeholders. It establishes a process for pilot implementation, including teacher credentialing through Tribal certification systems verified by the Department. These efforts reflect the shared goal of ensuring every student receives an excellent education that reflects local priorities and culture while remaining accountable under state law.

Legislation, Regulations, and Board Actions

House Bill 59 – Demonstration State–Tribal Education Compacts

During the 2025 legislative session, [HB 59](#)⁷ was introduced to authorize demonstration State–Tribal Education Compacts. The bill builds upon the foundation established by Senate Bill 34 (CH. 43 SLA 22) and codifies the process for Tribes to enter compacts with the State to operate public schools.

HB 59 establishes the structure, funding mechanism, and accountability framework for Tribally Compacted Public Schools. It authorizes the Commissioner of Education and Early Development to enter into compacts, defines the roles of the State and participating Tribes, and ensures that Tribally Compacted Public Schools operate within the broader public education system. The bill includes provisions related to teacher certification, student transportation, parental rights, and fiscal accountability.

Following its introduction, HB 59 was referred to the House Tribal Affairs Committee, where members adopted an amendment to shorten the proposed timeframe for implementation. The bill then advanced to the House Education Committee for further consideration.

As of October 2025, HB 59 remains in the House Education Committee and has not yet advanced to a full House or Senate vote. A related measure, [SB 66](#)⁸, was also introduced in the Senate and referred to the Senate Education Committee, where it remains under review.

⁷ House Bill 59, *An Act relating to demonstration state-tribal education compacts; relating to demonstration state-tribal education compact schools; and providing for an effective date* (34th Leg., 1st Sess. 2025). Retrieved on October 13, 2025, from https://www.akleg.gov/basis/Bill/Detail/34?Root=HB++59&utm_source

⁸ Senate Bill 66, *An Act relating to demonstration state-tribal education compacts; relating to demonstration state-tribal education compact schools; and providing for an effective date* (34th Leg., 1st Sess. 2025). Retrieved from <https://www.akleg.gov/basis/Bill/Detail/34?Root=SB++66>

Strategic Priority 4

Prepare, attract, and retain effective education professionals

What Progress Looks Like by 2025










Of new teachers in Alaska will have completed their teacher preparation program through an Alaska university.










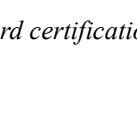


Of educators new to Alaska or the profession will participate in a cohort-based induction program with culturally responsive and trauma-informed training, and mentor support.



Of Alaska school districts will experience less than 15 annual educator turnover (including within-district moves).

STRATEGY FY2017	PROGRESS	RECOMMENDATION
 <p>Increase the number of districts offering an Educators Rising program.</p>	<p>Since 2017, the number of districts and chapters participating in Educators Rising has remained relatively stable. Student participation, however, has increased from 96 students in 2017–18 to 189 students in 2024–25. Detailed data and program updates are provided in the Data and Progress indicators section below the table.</p>	 <p>Maintain support for CTSOs and develop pre-apprenticeship Educator CTE pathways.</p>
 <p>Support Alaska's educator preparation programs through accreditation and partnerships.</p>	<p>DEED supports educator preparation providers (EPPs) in CAEP accreditation by coordinating timelines, providing data, aligning policies, and offering technical guidance. The CAEP accreditation cycle lasts seven years before programs undergo review for renewal. There is a growing emphasis on partnerships, such as the University of Alaska Southeast's collaboration with Sealaska Corporation for its Master of Arts in Teaching - Indigenous Language Pathway, which is seeking provisional accreditation.</p>	 <p>Support educator preparation providers in aligning teacher and principal apprenticeship pathways with the CAEP accreditation process and in removing barriers to certification.</p>
 <p>Provide induction programs for educators new to Alaska and/or the profession.</p>	<p>DEED has not taken statewide action on this strategic priority, and no formal mechanism currently exists to gather information from districts, Educator Preparation Providers (EPPs), or other education partners on their efforts.</p>	 <p>Reevaluate this strategy within the broader priority.</p>
 <p>Create an Educator Preparation Standards Board for licensing.</p>	<p>DEED has not taken statewide action on this strategic priority.</p>	

STRATEGY FY2017	PROGRESS	RECOMMENDATION
 <p>Reimagine Alaska studies and multicultural curriculum requirements through the lens of cultural literacy.</p>	DEED has not taken statewide action on this strategic priority.	 <p>Reevaluate this strategy within the broader priority.</p>
 <p>Add supports for new and veteran administrators.</p>	DEED is developing a Principal Registered Apprenticeship Pathway and has created eight eLearning courses to support administrators with Reads Act implementation (see Appendix A). There is no formal statewide mechanism for DEED to measure district, EPP, or partner efforts at this time.	 <p>Continue to develop and administer micro-credential courses and set annual targets for new offerings.</p>
 <p>Develop micro-credentialing opportunities for educators in high-impact areas (cultural literacy, trauma-informed instruction, STEM, Alaska's English language arts and math standards, and text analysis).</p>	Since 2017, DEED has created 34 continuing education credits courses across the Alaska Reads Act literacy (19), ELA/Math standards (1), and trauma-informed instruction (13) and has issued over 2,400 CEU certificates. See Appendix B for the full course list.	 <p>Reevaluate this strategy within the broader priority.</p>
 <p>Emphasize support/professional growth through district educator evaluation systems.</p>	DEED has not taken statewide action on this strategic priority, and no formal mechanism currently exists to gather information from districts, Educator Preparation Providers (EPPs), or other education partners on their efforts.	 <p>Maintain recognition of Alaska's master educators through implementation of the National Board-Certified Teacher incentive statute.</p>
 <p>Continue to recognize and utilize Alaska's master educators (e.g., National Board-Certified Educators).</p>	Legislation enacted in 2024 (AS 14.20.225) authorizes a \$5,000 annual incentive payment and reimbursement of certification costs for National Board-Certified Teachers; statute codified but not yet funded. ⁹¹⁴	

⁹Alaska Stat. § 14.20.225, *Teacher incentive payments and reimbursement of costs relating to national board certification* (2024). Retrieved from <https://www.akleg.gov/basis/statutes.asp#14.20.225>

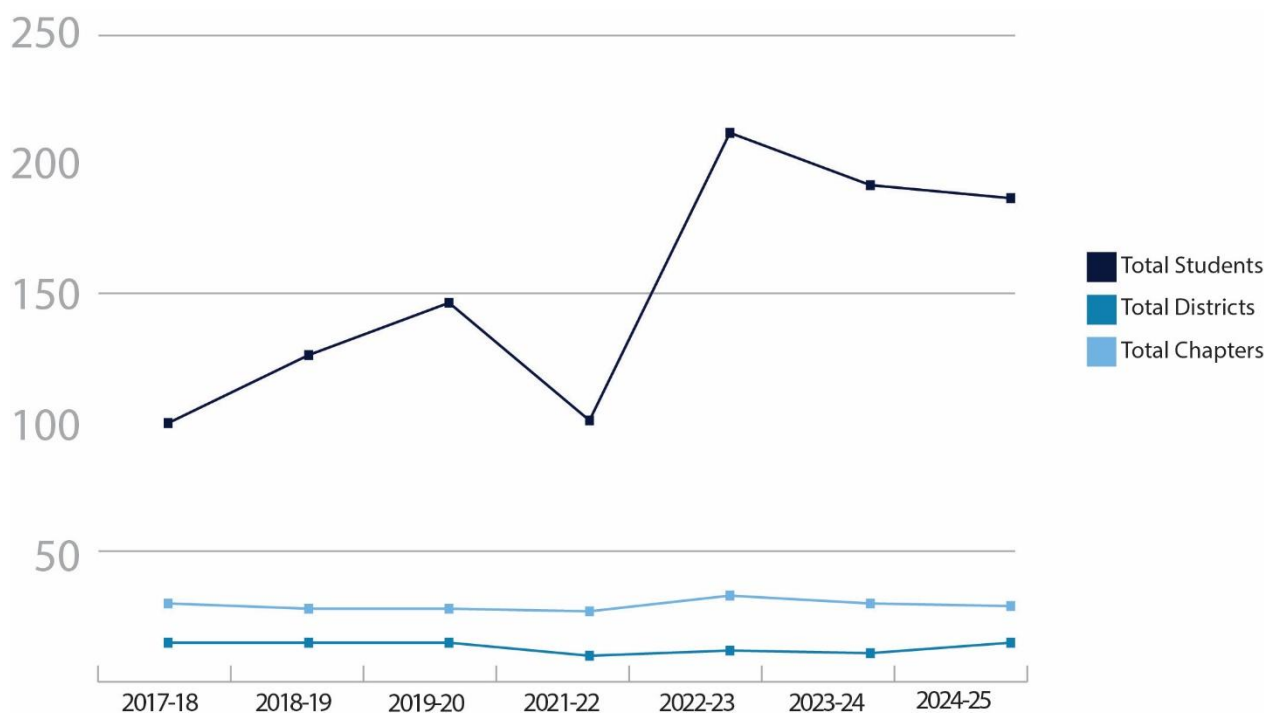
Data and Progress Indicators

Educator's Rising - Career and Technical Student Organization

Educators Rising is a career and technical student organization (CTSO) hosted by K–12 Outreach at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. The program introduces high school students to the teaching profession, giving them early exposure to education as a career pathway. This work directly aligns with Alaska's Teacher Retention and Recruitment (TRR) initiative, which emphasizes the importance of growing local talent and strengthening “earn and learn” pipelines. By positioning teaching alongside other K–12 CTE pathways, Educators Rising connects student interest to Alaska's critical workforce demand for teachers.

Since 2017, the number of districts and chapters participating in Educators Rising has remained relatively stable. Student participation, however, has increased from 96 students in 2017–18 to 189 students in 2024–25. In the current year, state funds are being directed specifically toward rural recruitment efforts, with the goal of increasing both the number of participating districts, chapters, and overall student involvement. The table and graph below provide a summary of these trends.

Educator's Rising | Participation in Alaska

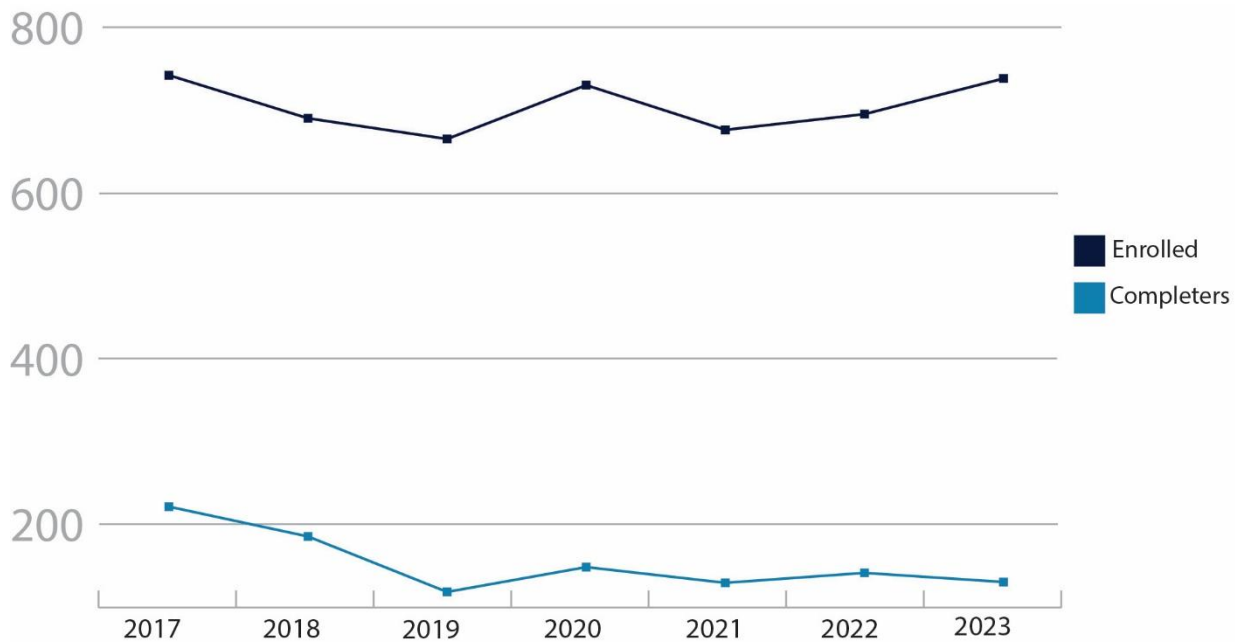


Source: Educators Rising participation data (districts, chapters, students) provided by Educators Rising Alaska, University of Alaska, via email to DEED, dated September 3, 2025.

Progress on Alaska's In-State Teacher Preparation Programs

One of the progress indicators of success was that 90percent of new teachers in Alaska would complete their preparation through an Alaska university. According to Educational Testing Service (ETS) Higher Education Act (HEA) Title II reports, Alaska's in-state teacher preparation program enrollment remained relatively steady from 2017 through 2023, while the number of program completers has declined over the same period. In 2017, there were 742 students enrolled and 221 completers, compared to 738 enrolled and 130 completers in 2023. Data for 2024 is still being compiled.

Alaska Teacher Preparation Program | Enrollment & Completers

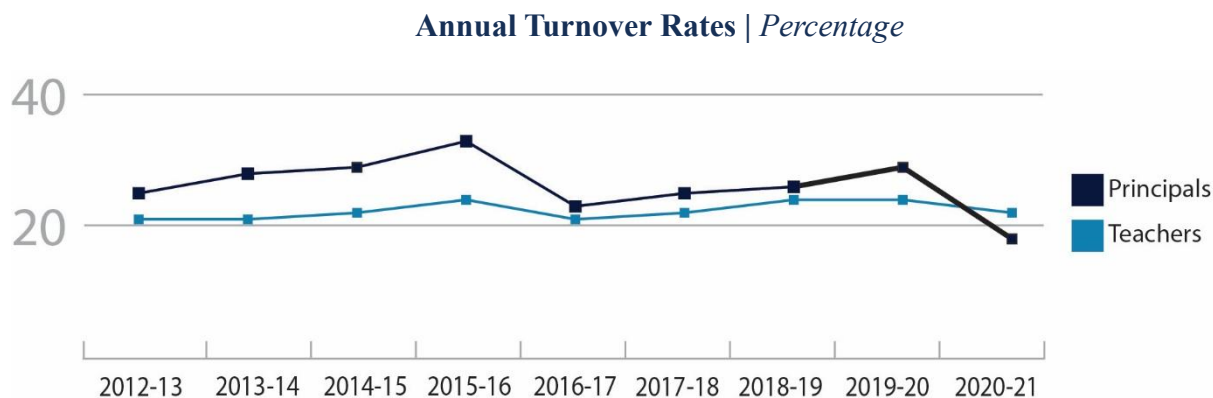


Source: U.S. Department of Education, Title II Reports. Alaska State Report.¹⁰

¹⁰ U.S. Department of Education. Title II Reports: Alaska State Report. Retrieved August 27, 2025, from <https://title2.ed.gov/Public/Report/StateHome.aspx>

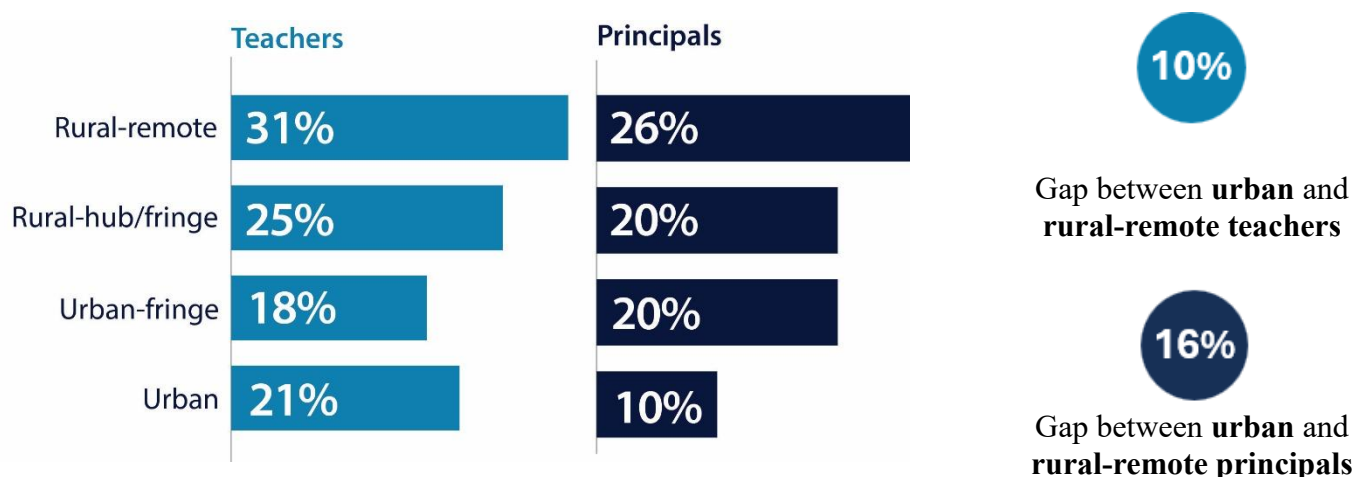
Alaska Teacher Turnover Data and Trends

Teacher turnover in Alaska has been documented through [Regional Educational Laboratory \(REL\) Northwest reports](#), which tracked statewide trends through 2019 and then updated the analysis for 2019–2021.¹¹ These studies showed persistent turnover challenges, with the most significant impacts occurring in remote rural districts where staffing instability is highest.



2020-21 Annual Turnover Rates | Percentage

Rural schools have much higher teacher and principal turnover than urban-fringe schools.



Source: *Educator Retention and Turnover in Alaska: 2021 Update*, Regional Educational Laboratory Northwest, 2021.

To update and expand this analysis, the DEED is contracting with the University of Alaska’s Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) to extend teacher turnover data through 2025. Preliminary findings are expected in late 2025 or early 2026.

¹¹ Regional Educational Laboratory Northwest (2021). *Educator Retention and Turnover in Alaska: 2021 Update*. Retrieved from https://www.akleg.gov/basis/get_documents.asp?docid=2378&session=33.

Programs, Initiatives, and Investments

Teacher Retention and Recruitment Initiative

The Teacher Retention and Recruitment (TRR) Initiative was launched in September 2016 when the SBOE identified it as a strategic priority through Alaska’s Education Challenge. In April 2020, the Governor of Alaska convened a statewide TRR working group to bring together key stakeholders. By April 2021, the [TRR Action Plan](#) was rolled out, outlining 18 recommendations across six essential areas.¹² Building on this foundation, the [TRR Playbook](#) was finalized in August 2023, refining the recommendations into 16 implementation strategies organized by stakeholder group.¹³ The initiative now moves into its next phase, calling for broad stakeholder engagement, including districts, state administrators, partner organizations, community members, and elected officials, to drive the coordinated actions needed to stabilize and strengthen Alaska’s educator workforce.

Teacher Registered Apprenticeship Program

The Teacher Registered Apprenticeship Program (T-RAP) grew out of the Teacher Retention and Recruitment (TRR) Initiative under the essential recommendations for Grow Your Own and Creating Paraprofessional Pathways. The program is designed to develop educators from local communities who reflect and understand the cultures of the students they serve, while providing a sustainable “earn and learn” pathway into the profession. The SBOE formally advanced this approach through a resolution in January 2023, establishing T-RAP as a cornerstone strategy for educator development.

As of August 2025, seven sponsors have been approved by the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) to operate teacher apprenticeship programs in Alaska:



Southeast Childhood Collective
(Formerly: AEYC–SEA)



Arctic Slope Regional Corporation (Arctic Slope)



Bering Strait School District (BSSD)



Bristol Bay Regional CTE Consortium (BBRCTE)



Rural Alaska Community Action Program (Rural CAP)



Sealaska Heritage Institute (SHI)



¹² Adams, B. L. (2021, April). *Teacher retention and recruitment action plan*. Retrieved from https://education.alaska.gov/Media/Default/trr-images/TRR_Action_Plan_April2021.pdf

¹³ Adams, B. L. (2023, September). *Teacher retention and recruitment playbook*. Retrieved from https://docs.google.com/document/d/1CQ7SqWKJr4Y23stpysYjvgLs_-KV42O0CZYpLLjgytw/edit

Four Education Preparation Providers (EPPs) are currently approved as related instruction providers for apprentices: Alaska Pacific University (APU), University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA), Kodiak College (KC), and Chadron State College (CSC). A revised application is pending with the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF). If approved, all in-state EPPs would participate in the program.

In total, 26 of Alaska's 53 school districts are engaged in a teacher registered apprenticeship, with more than 50 apprentices currently enrolled. Seven of those districts are approved under DEED's direct sponsorship, while the remaining participating districts are served through the other six sponsors.

Principal Registered Apprenticeship Program

In September 2025, the U.S. Department of Labor approved the DEED's application to establish the Principal Registered Apprenticeship Program (P-RAP). Anchored in the state's Teacher Retention and Recruitment (TRR) Initiative, P-RAP supports the essential areas of Developing Leadership and Grow Your Own.

Building on the same "earn and learn" model as the Teacher Registered Apprenticeship Program (T-RAP), P-RAP provides aspiring principals with the opportunity to complete coursework through Education Preparation Providers (EPPs) while serving full time in districts under the guidance of experienced school leaders. Sponsors provide program oversight and ensure compliance with U.S. Department of Labor apprenticeship standards, while EPPs deliver related instruction. Districts act as employers where apprentices gain practical leadership experience in real school settings.

DEED's program approval establishes the foundation for additional partnerships. Sealaska Heritage Institute (SHI) and the Bristol Bay Regional CTE Consortium (BBRCCTE) will be submitting applications to serve as individual sponsors of the P-RAP. Both organizations plan to partner with the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) and the University of Alaska Southeast (UAS) as related instruction providers.

Apprentices in the program demonstrate competencies aligned to the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSEL), with a strong emphasis on practices drawn from the TRR framework. This includes developing culturally responsive leadership skills that strengthen school climates, retain effective educators, and support recruitment of future teachers. P-RAP represents a significant step forward in building sustainable leadership pipelines across Alaska's schools and communities.

Modernizing Alaska's Educator Certification System

The modernized Alaska Educator Certification System, TEACH-AK, is designed to provide a fully digital, streamlined experience for both applicants and certification staff. Educators can now submit applications, upload supporting documents, and pay fees entirely online, while tracking the real-time status of their certification requests. The system offers automated notifications, reminders for renewal or missing requirements, and the ability for users to update personal information directly. For Teacher Certification staff, the platform provides integrated data management and reporting tools that improve compliance monitoring, workforce planning, and responsiveness to data requests. In addition, Teacher Certification recently launched the District Communication Hub to provide school districts with timely updates, guidance, and resources related to TEACH-AK. To introduce the new system and support both applicants and districts, Teacher Certification provides annual webinars highlighting system features and processes. Together, these initiatives enhance transparency, efficiency, and accessibility, allowing Alaska to more effectively recruit, certify, and support high-quality educators across the state.

Green to Teach Initiative

The Green to Teach Initiative will support the TRR Initiative under the essential area of Grow Your Own by harnessing the experience and skills of military personnel who are transitioning into civilian careers and preparing them to enter the educator workforce. Currently in the development phase, the initiative is designed to provide pathways that build on the leadership, discipline, and technical expertise of service members while connecting them with the academic preparation and mentoring required to become certified teachers. By establishing this structured transition route, Green to Teach will strengthen district pipelines with individuals already embedded in Alaska communities.

Legislation, Regulations, and Board Actions

Legislative Action on National Board Certification

In 2024, the Alaska Legislature enacted [AS 14.20.225](#), authorizing school districts and DEED to provide a \$5,000 annual incentive payment to teachers holding current National Board Certification and to reimburse associated certification costs.¹⁴ While the statute is now codified in Alaska law, no funding has yet been appropriated in recent fiscal years to support the incentive payments or reimbursements, leaving implementation dependent on future budget action.

Legislative Action on Out-of-State Professional Certificates

In 2022, the Legislature passed [SB 20](#), “Out of State Teacher Reciprocity” (Chapter 69, SLA 2022), amending AS 14.20.015 and AS 14.20.020 to require DEED to issue Alaska certificates to qualified teachers who hold a valid out-of-state certificate.¹⁵ DEED implemented the law in 2023 by adopting 4 AAC 12.306 and amending 4 AAC 12.305, establishing the Professional Out-of-State Teacher Certificate. The certificate is issued for two years, may be extended once to a total of five years, and is renewable through TEACH-AK.

Proposed Teacher Incentive Legislation

Governor Dunleavy has brought forward legislation in multiple sessions to provide lump sum incentive payments for certified teachers, directly reflecting the TRR Playbook’s recommendation to strengthen retention through financial incentives. Proposals were first introduced in 2023 ([HB 106](#)¹⁶), again included in the Governor’s comprehensive education reform package in 2025 ([HB 76](#)¹⁷ & [SB 82](#)¹⁸), and most recently reintroduced during the August 2025 special session through [SB 1001](#)¹⁹. Although these measures have not yet been enacted, they demonstrate the Governor’s continued efforts to make financial incentives a central part of Alaska’s strategy for teacher retention and recruitment.

¹⁴ Alaska Stat. § 14.20.225, *Teacher incentive payments and reimbursement of costs relating to national board certification* (2024). Retrieved from <https://www.akleg.gov/basis/statutes.asp#14.20.225>

¹⁵ Senate Bill 20, *Out of State Teacher Reciprocity* (32nd Leg., 2nd Sess. 2022). Retrieved from <https://www.akleg.gov/basis/Bill/Detail/32?Root=SB+20>

¹⁶ House Bill 106, *An Act relating to teacher incentive payments* (33rd Leg., 1st Sess. 2023). Retrieved from <https://www.akleg.gov/basis/Bill/Detail/33?Root=hb+106>

¹⁷ House Bill 76, *An Act relating to education; and providing for an effective date* (34th Leg., 1st Sess. 2025). Retrieved from <https://www.akleg.gov/basis/Bill/Detail/34?Root=HB++76>

¹⁸ Senate Bill 82, *An Act relating to education; and providing for an effective date* (34th Leg., 1st Sess. 2025). Retrieved from <https://www.akleg.gov/basis/Bill/Detail/34?Root=SB++82>

¹⁹ Senate Bill 1001, *An Act relating to teacher incentive payments* (34th Leg., 2nd Spec. Sess. 2025). Retrieved from <https://www.akleg.gov/basis/Bill/Text/34?Hsid=SB1001A>

SBOE Resolution on Teacher Registered Apprenticeships

In January 2023, the SBOE adopted a [resolution](#) supporting the creation of a Teacher Registered Apprenticeship Program (T-RAP) as part of Alaska’s Grow Your Own strategy under the TRR Initiative.²⁰ The resolution emphasized the importance of developing local pipelines by creating a structured pathway for paraprofessionals and community members to become certified teachers while remaining in their home districts. This action provided the foundation for the DEED to pursue approval from the U.S. Department of Labor and to expand partnerships with Education Preparation Providers (EPPs) and districts, making registered apprenticeships a cornerstone of Alaska’s educator workforce strategy.

SBOE Resolution on Green to Teach Initiative

In January 2023, the SBOE adopted a resolution supporting the development of the [Green to Teach Initiative](#) under the TRR essential area of Grow Your Own.²¹ The resolution recognized the opportunity to harness the skills and leadership of military personnel transitioning to civilian careers and create structured pathways for them to become certified teachers. This action established the foundation for the DEED to design Green to Teach as a future strategy to strengthen local teacher pipelines, support community stability, and ensure that Alaska’s educator workforce reflects both the experience and the values of the communities it serves.

²⁰ State Board of Education (2023, January 25). *Resolution 01-2023: In support of alternative pathways to certification*. Retrieved from https://education.alaska.gov/State_Board/pdf/01-2023%20SBOE%20Alt%20Teacher%20Pathways%20Resolution.pdf

²¹ State Board of Education (2025, January 22). *Resolution 01-2025: In support of establishing a Green to Teach pathway*. Retrieved from https://education.alaska.gov/state_board/january-2025/4.1%20Resolution%20Establish%20Green%20to%20Teach%20Pathway%2001.22.25.pdf.

Teacher Certification Regulation Changes

Alaska Administrative Code Title 4, Education and Early Development, Chapter 12 – Certification of Professional Teachers (4 AAC 12.010–4 AAC 12.900) underwent numerous amendments between 2017 and 2025. These changes addressed new statutory mandates and SBOE priorities, including the addition of four mandatory training requirements in 2017, creation of limited certificates to support world language and CTE pathways, expansion of reciprocity for out-of-state teachers, adoption of the Alaska Reads Act endorsements, and updated requirements for National Board Certification and content area examinations. Collectively, these amendments reflect the state’s efforts to modernize certification processes, respond to legislative direction, and align educator qualifications with evolving educational priorities.

Regulation	Adopted Changes	Date Approved
<i>Amend 4 AAC 12.380(e)</i> ²²	Update the length of time a retired teacher can serve as a long-term substitute teacher from 120 to 165 days.	3/11/2025
<i>Add section 4 AAC 12.412</i> ²²	Added section aligning with AS 14.20.225 to establish reporting dates for districts to identify teachers eligible for board certification reimbursement; directed DEED to develop a reimbursement process, subject to appropriation.	3/11/2025
<i>Amend 4 AAC 12.407 (1-3)</i> ²³	Updated content area examinations: removed discontinued Praxis II titles, introduced their replacements, and added Pearson FLEX exams including Elementary Ed Subtest I & II, English Language Arts, English Learners I, Foundations of Reading, Mathematics, Middle Grades ELA, Middle Grades General Science, Social Science, and Spanish.	3/11/2025
<i>Add 4 AAC 04.225 & Amend 4 AAC 06.079</i> ²⁴	Adopted 4 AAC 04.225 to incorporate ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines (2012) for alternative world language assessments; amended 4 AAC 06.079 (Seal of Biliteracy) to integrate these standards, clarified definition of “world language,” and updated 4 AAC 12.388 accordingly.	12/6/2023
<i>Amend 4 AAC 12.300(g)</i> ²⁵	Introduced a \$50 fee for applying for a reading endorsement, effective July 1, 2023, through December 30, 2028.	4/19/2023

²² State Board of Education. (2025, March 11). *Cover Memo 11A*. Retrieved September 10, 2025, from https://education.alaska.gov/state_board/march-2025/11.0A%20Cover%20Memo%20work%20session%20item%20for%20adoption%20Board%20Certification.pdf

²³ State Board of Education. (2025, March 11). *Cover Memo 11B*. Retrieved September 10, 2025, from https://education.alaska.gov/state_board/march-2025/11.0B%20Cover%20Memo%20Work%20Session%20item%20for%20adoptionTeacher%20Certification%20Content%20Area%20Exams%20v2.pdf

²⁴ State Board of Education. (2023, December 6). *Cover memo 6A: Limited teacher certificate and Seal of Biliteracy work session item*. Retrieved September 10, 2025, from https://education.alaska.gov/state_board/december-2023/6A.0%20StateBoardWorkSession_LimitedTeacherCert%20and%20SealofBiliteracy.pdf

²⁵ State Board of Education. (2023, April 19). *Cover memo 4: Alaska Reads Act teacher certification regulations adoption*. Retrieved September 10, 2025, from https://education.alaska.gov/State_Board/april-2023/4.0%20AK%20Reads%20Act%20Cover%20Memo%20Business%20Meeting%20Reg%20Adoption.pdf

<i>Amend 4 AAC 12.305</i> ²⁵	Requires applicants seeking certification under AS 14.20.015(c) or AS 14.20.020(i) to meet the new endorsement requirements in 4 AAC 12.393.	4/19/2023
<i>Add 4 AAC 12.392</i> ²⁵	Established Early Education Lead Teacher Endorsement requirements: six credit hours in early childhood education or two years of experience plus approved training.	4/19/2023
<i>Add 4 AAC 12.393</i> ²⁵	Established K–3 Teacher and Reading Teacher Endorsement requirements, including required training or exam. Provides a two-year window for reading teachers to obtain the endorsement.	4/19/2023
<i>Add 4 AAC 12.388</i> ²⁶	Repealed the prior limited world language expert certificate and established a new limited world language immersion teacher certificate. Applicants may demonstrate expertise, subject competency, and instructional skills through alternative means, and districts must provide at least two years of mentorship.	3/16/2023
<i>Amend 4 AAC 12.397(e)</i> ²⁶	Updated mandatory training requirements to apply to holders of the new limited world language immersion teacher certificate created under 4 AAC 12.388.	3/16/2023
<i>Amend 4 AAC 12.405</i> ²⁶	Amended renewal provisions to include the limited world language immersion teacher certificate created under 4 AAC 12.388.	3/16/2023
<i>Amend 4 AAC 12.305</i> ²⁷	Allowed experienced teachers with a valid, regular out-of-state teaching certificate and at least two years of teaching experience to qualify for an Alaska Professional certificate; also established a timeline for satisfying Alaska studies/multicultural coursework and mandatory training requirements.	3/16/2023
<i>Amend 4 AAC 12.900</i> ²⁷	Updated definitions to align with the SB 20 changes and support streamlined certification processes for out-of-state applicants.	3/16/2023
<i>Amend 4 AAC 04.220</i> ²⁸	Changed “regionally accredited” to “regionally or nationally accredited” in reference to degrees/credits accepted for certification.	9/7/2022
<i>Amend 4 AAC 12.300 & 4 AAC 12.305</i> ²⁸	Expanded access to alternative certification, including special education and special services endorsements for bachelor’s-prepared applicants.	9/7/2022

²⁶ State Board of Education. (2023, March 16). *Cover memo 12A: Teacher Certification HB 19 Business Meeting*. Retrieved September 10, 2025, from https://education.alaska.gov/State_Board/pdf/March2023/12A.0%20Teacher%20Certification%20HB%2019%20Business%20Meeting.pdf

²⁷ State Board of Education. (2022, June 8). *Cover memo 11C: Seal of Biliteracy business meeting*. Retrieved September 10, 2025, from https://education.alaska.gov/State_Board/june2022/11C.0%20Seal%20of%20Biliteracy%20Cover%20Memo%20Business%20Meeting-smht.pdf

²⁸ State Board of Education. (2022, September 7). *Cover memo 7A: Teacher certification regulations — Business meeting*. Retrieved September 10, 2025, from https://education.alaska.gov/State_Board/september2022/7A.0%20Teacher%20Certification%20Regs%20-%20Business%20Cover%20Memo%20SGS%20edits.pdf

<i>Add 4 AAC 12.308</i> ²⁸	New section: a department-approved micro-credential may be used toward renewal requirements.	9/7/2022
<i>Amend 4 AAC 12.335, 12.340, 12.347</i> ²⁸	Repealed and readopted to streamline Initial, Provisional, and Professional teacher certificate language.	9/7/2022
<i>Amend 4 AAC 12.355 & 4 AAC 12.375</i> ²⁸	Permitted paraprofessionals with at least two years of experience to qualify for a Type I limited certificate, creating a “grow your own” pathway to full certification.	9/7/2022
<i>Amend 4 AAC 12.388</i> ²⁸	Repealed and readopted; clarified limited certificates in world language and immersion; cross-referenced mandatory training in 4 AAC 12.397.	9/7/2022
<i>Amend 4 AAC 12.395 & 4 AAC 12.396</i> ²⁸	Strengthened endorsement requirements for elementary certification, including three years teaching plus passing exams in elementary education and teaching reading.	9/7/2022
<i>Amend 4 AAC 12.401 & 4 AAC 12.405</i> ²⁸	Clarified provisions for renewal of certificates and recognition of micro-credentials for renewal credit.	9/7/2022
<i>Amend 4 AAC 12.410 & 4 AAC 12.415</i> ²⁸	Clarified mandatory training requirements for school administrators and special services certificates.	9/7/2022
<i>Amend 4 AAC 12.900</i> ²⁸	Repealed and readopted; updated definitions including “regionally or nationally accredited,” “micro-credential,” and “limited certificate.”	9/7/2022
<i>Add 4 AAC 06.077</i> ²⁹	Adopted regulation establishing Alaska’s state Seal of Biliteracy. Proficiency in English plus one other world language can be demonstrated via one of six options (GPA only one option), and students may begin qualifying as early as sophomore year.	6/8/2022
<i>Repeal 4 AAC 12.400</i> ³⁰	Repealed the Emergency Type C special services certificate for special education or related services personnel due to federal restrictions.	9/16/2020
<i>4 AAC 12.40</i> ³⁰	Adopted new Emergency Certificate allowing issuance of emergency administrative (Type B) and emergency teacher certificates (initial), excluding special education and related services; valid for remainder of the school year, non-renewable, and requires local board mentoring.	9/16/2020

²⁹ State Board of Education. (2022, June 8). *Cover memo 11C: Seal of Biliteracy business meeting*. Retrieved September 10, 2025, from https://education.alaska.gov/State_Board/june2022/11C.0%20Seal%20of%20Biliteracy%20Cover%20Memo%20Business%20Meeting-smht.pdf

³⁰ State Board of Education. (2020, September 16). *Cover memo 8B: Emergency certification changes (4 AAC 12.400 repeal, 4 AAC 12.401 adoption)*. Retrieved September 10, 2025, from https://education.alaska.gov/State_Board/september2020/8B%2020.09.16%20Final%20Cover%20Memo%20Bus%20Mtg%20-%20Emergency%20Certificate.pdf

4 AAC 12.407 ³¹	Added three exams to the approved list of basic competency tests for initial Alaska teacher certification: (1) Pennsylvania Pre-service Academic Performance Assessment, (2) Missouri Educator Gateway Assessment, (3) Illinois Test of Academic Proficiency. Qualifying scores are those accepted in the originating jurisdiction.	3/25/2019
4 AAC 12.407 – <i>Reciprocity</i> ³¹	Allowed applicants who passed a basic competency exam in reading, writing, and mathematics approved by another state’s certifying agency to use that exam to meet Alaska’s requirement under AS 14.20.020(i).	3/25/2019
4 AAC 12.388 – <i>Type M Limited CTE Certificate</i> ³¹	Eliminated the requirement for CTE teachers certified through a Type M Limited certificate to pass a basic competency exam, in response to concerns that the requirement was limiting CTE offerings for Alaska students.	3/25/2019
4 AAC 12.388 – <i>World Language Expert Limited Teacher Certificate</i> ³²	Created a new limited certificate to address staffing challenges in language immersion programs. Applicants must hold at least a bachelor’s degree, pass an approved world language content area exam and the math portion of a basic competency exam, and be enrolled in or have completed an approved teacher preparation program. Districts are required to provide mentorship for the first two years. Certificate holders may only teach in their language of expertise.	3/20/2018
<i>Amend 4 AAC 12.305 (Mandatory trainings)</i>	Added the requirement that applicants complete four state-mandated trainings prior to certification: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol- or drug-related disabilities (AS 14.20.680) • Sexual abuse and sexual assault awareness and prevention (AS 14.30.355) • Dating violence and abuse awareness and prevention (AS 14.30.356) Suicide awareness and prevention (AS 14.30.362)	6/30/2017

³¹ Alaska Department of Education and Early Development. (2019, March 22). *Proposed changes to teacher certification regulations: Basic Competency Exams and Type-M CTE certificate*. Information Exchange, Vol. 47 No. 11. Retrieved September 10, 2025, from <https://education.alaska.gov/infoexch/ix190322>



³² State Board of Education. (2018, March 20). *Cover memo: World language expert limited teacher certificate (Agenda Item 7A/13A)*. Archived Board Meeting Document.

Strategic Priority 5

Improve the safety and well-being of students through school partnerships with families, communities and tribes.




What Progress Looks Like by 2025

- The number of students who report on the 2025 Alaska Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) that they did not go to school on one or more of the last 30 days because they felt unsafe will decrease by 35 percent
- The number of students suspended from school for non-violent and non-safety-related incidents in a given school year will decrease by at least 15 percent.

STRATEGY FY2017	PROGRESS	RECOMMENDATION
 <p>Create sustainable and positive school climates that are safe, supportive, and engaging for all students, staff, and communities.</p>	<p>Positive Behavior Interventions & Support (PBIS)</p> <p>Alaska Education’s Challenge Priority 5 addresses the need for a safe and healthy school environment. This training exposes school teams to a behavioral framework that will support growth in positive behavior and school culture, leading to systemic change in schools. The School Health & Safety Team currently has 45 schools in 14 districts participating in the AK PBIS program. DEED has also been supporting the Anchorage School District (ASD) through the provision of Title IV-A funds as they roll out PBIS in their schools in cohorts. Currently 45 schools in ASD are participating in their project.</p> <p>Partners: Northwest Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports Network (NWPBIS), School Safety and Resiliency (SRS) Team, School Districts, Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority (AMHTA)</p> <p><i>See Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support Growth data below. Also see Aligning Behavioral-Threat-Assessment-And-Management-With-A-Multi-Tiered-System-Of-Support.</i></p>	 <p>Continue</p>

STRATEGY FY2017	PROGRESS	RECOMMENDATION
<div data-bbox="207 783 344 919" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="115 957 435 1098">Provide and encourage training for schools on best practices to improve school climate.</p>	<p data-bbox="488 195 631 226">eLearning</p> <p data-bbox="488 231 1109 516">The Alaska DEED maintains a catalog of eLearning courses available for educators across the state. These web-based, interactive courses help district staff comply with state and federal training requirements. DEED periodically develops new courses in response to emerging state standards, new assessments, or updated statutes and regulations.</p> <p data-bbox="488 520 1104 810">All courses are self-paced, accessible anytime and anywhere, and a certificate is issued upon completion. Each school district has a group page that allows for discussion among members and provides a repository for additional supporting documents. The DEED Health and Safety Team manages these courses in collaboration with the partners listed below.</p> <p data-bbox="488 814 1101 919">In FY2025, approximately 46,800 certificates were issued for 107 eLearning courses. Courses offered during FY2025 included:</p> <ul data-bbox="537 921 1114 1386" style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of Chronic Conditions – approx. 2,700 certificates issued • Mandatory Courses – approx. 26,900 certificates issued • Nutrition and School Lunch – approx. 5,900 certificates issued • Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)/Trauma-Engaged Courses – approx. 3,200 certificates issued • Test Administration – approx. 2,900 certificates issued • Special Education – approx. 1,500 certificates issued • Reading – approx. 2,700 certificates issued • Crisis Planning – approx. 600 certificates issued <p data-bbox="488 1421 1125 1692">Partners: EdgePoint; DEED teams (Special Education, Virtual Consortium, Child Nutrition, Standards and Assessment, Elementary and Secondary Education Act [ESEA], School Recognition, and Support); Alaska Department of Health (DOH), including DBH and Division of Public Health (DPH); Department of Public Safety (DPS); Division of Family and Community Services (DFCS); Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA)</p>	<div data-bbox="1268 819 1404 955" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="1279 995 1395 1026">Continue</p>

STRATEGY FY2017	PROGRESS	RECOMMENDATION
<div data-bbox="206 732 344 873" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="87 909 461 1125">Provide supports for schools, communities, and families that are responsive to the needs of children who have experienced serious hardships in their lives.</p>	<p data-bbox="488 191 841 226">Trauma-Engaged Schools</p> <p data-bbox="488 228 1120 663">Trauma-engaged schools are educational institutions that acknowledge the widespread impact of trauma on students and implement strategies to create a supportive environment. These schools recognize that trauma can significantly affect a student's ability to learn and thrive, and they strive to establish safe and predictable settings where students feel empowered and supported. When trauma-engaged practices are in place, students are better able to learn, which can greatly increase their academic achievement.</p> <p data-bbox="488 665 1114 1178">In January 2019, DEED released <i>Transforming Schools: A Framework for Trauma-Engaged Practice in Alaska</i>. Since its rollout, nearly 15,000 copies have been distributed across the state. DEED continues to implement the Trauma Framework through the development of the online <i>Transforming Schools Trauma Toolkit</i> in collaboration with the AASB. The toolkit is designed as a supplemental, practical resource to assist Alaska schools in becoming fully trauma-engaged. It contains training, professional learning, tools, activities, and resources to illustrate, expand on, and implement the framework's chapters.</p> <p data-bbox="488 1180 1091 1398">Partners: AASB; AMHB; DPH; AMHTA; Alaska Child Trauma Center (ACTC); First Alaskans Institute (FAI); Alaska After School Network (AASN); Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (CDVSA); school districts; Alaska non-profits</p> <p data-bbox="488 1400 1114 1614"><u>See <i>Transforming-Schools Framework for Trauma-Engaged Practice in Alaska</i>, <i>Improving Education Outcomes for Students who have Experienced Trauma and or Adversity</i>, <i>Healing School Systems</i> <i>Healing School Systems -Voices from the Field</i></u></p> <p data-bbox="488 1617 1127 1707">Department of Public Safety (DPS); Division of Family and Community Services (DFCS); Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA)</p>	<div data-bbox="1268 825 1406 966" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="1279 1003 1395 1035">Continue</p>

STRATEGY FY2017	PROGRESS	RECOMMENDATION
 <p>Increase health- and safety-focused partnerships between schools and their communities.</p> <p>Provide supports for all public schools to keep students and staff members safe.</p>	<p>School Safety & Emergency Management The safety of all students and staff in Alaska’s schools has always been a top priority for DEED. Both eLearning and in-person training and support are provided to districts, in collaboration with local, state, and federal partners. Partners: DOH; Department of Homeland Security (Homeland Security); Department of Public Safety (DPS); Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI); Southeast Regional Resource Center (SERRC) See Valdez Threat Assessment Guidebook 2.8y See also <u>Aligning-Behavioral-Threat-Assessment-And-Management-With-A-Multi-Tiered-System-Of-Support</u></p>	 <p>Continue</p>
	<p>School Health Profiles The School Health Profiles is a survey system that assesses school health policies and practices in states, large urban school districts, and territories. The surveys are conducted biennially by education and health agencies with middle and high school principals and lead health education teachers.</p> <p>Partner: DOH</p>	
	<p>Youth Risk Behavior Survey The Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) is a school-based survey of Alaska high school students. It collects critical information about the health of Alaska teens, including risk behaviors that contribute to social problems, disabilities, and suicide.</p> <p>Partner: DOH</p>	
	<p>Professional Boundaries The DEED helped fund work with districts to develop policy and provide professional boundaries training for school staff. These trainings were created in partnership with the AASB and the school insurance industry to address inappropriate relationships between students and staff. Insurance companies often reduce premiums for schools that require staff to complete these courses and maintain strong policies on professional boundaries. Partners: AASB</p>	 <p>Complete</p>

STRATEGY FY2017	PROGRESS	RECOMMENDATION
<div data-bbox="204 789 344 930" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="99 972 451 1113">Increase health- and safety-focused partnerships between schools and their communities.</p> <p data-bbox="110 1155 440 1295">Provide supports for all public schools to keep students and staff members safe.</p>	<div data-bbox="485 191 1156 924" data-label="Text"> <p>Stronger Connections Grant On June 25, 2022, the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act (BSCA) was signed into law. The Act has been described as “an important first step toward reducing the risk of gun violence in schools and communities.” Under Title IV, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), funding was made available to state educational agencies (SEAs) to support safer and healthier learning environments for students. The Stronger Connections Grant program is awarded to local school districts (local education agencies, or LEAs). These multiyear grants allow districts to spend funds over a two- or three-year period. Fifteen districts have received grants and are using the funds for various projects, including school safety items such as cameras and other security measures, mental health supports, professional development, discipline specialists, and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). All districts that applied were able to receive funding. Partners: U.S. Department of Education (USDOE), school districts, Southeast Regional Resource Center (SERRC).</p> </div> <div data-bbox="485 968 1156 1425" data-label="Text"> <p>Crisis Response – Natural Disasters, School Fires, Suicides, Student/Staff Loss The DEED Health and Safety Team responds to school crises as they arise. The team works with school districts to provide support and resources, which may include connecting districts with local, state, and federal partners. Over the past several years, the team has responded to crises such as landslides, tsunamis, school fires, suicides, and student or staff deaths caused by car accidents, plane crashes, and other incidents. Partners: School districts; Department of Homeland Security (DHS); SERRC; Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI); National Child Traumatic Stress Network; Division of Behavioral Health (DBH)</p> </div> <div data-bbox="485 1436 1156 1900" data-label="Text"> <p>Naloxone Administration In the spring of 2024, the Legislature passed a bill requiring all schools to have access to Naloxone and to ensure trained staff are present during school hours and at after-school events. DEED partnered with DOH to distribute Naloxone kits to schools and, through the eLearning system, updated an existing course to meet statutory requirements. Nearly 1,500 Alaska school staff completed the course in FY2025. The Health and Safety Team and DOH also maintain two eLearning courses for educators on opioids and Naloxone, originally released in late 2017 and early 2018. Partners: DOH, school districts, National Guard</p> </div>	<div data-bbox="1284 921 1424 1062" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="1295 1100 1412 1129">Continue</p>




STRATEGY FY2017	PROGRESS	RECOMMENDATION
<div data-bbox="207 873 344 1010" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="110 1052 440 1119">Increase access to nursing and counseling services.</p>	<p data-bbox="490 191 1065 222">Trauma-Engaged Schools and PBIS Coaching</p> <p data-bbox="490 260 1115 890">This project supports school districts in developing mental health services for students of all ages, with priority given to rural and remote districts that do not otherwise have access to these supports. DEED staff collaborate with Trust, DOH, and other partners to expand behavioral health services in schools, focusing on under-resourced districts that have identified a need to strengthen access for students. DEED staff also provide direct support to school personnel in rural districts and report to Trust and advisory boards on efforts to expand behavioral health services statewide. In addition, the team facilitates monthly meetings with rural school counselors and school social workers. These sessions include presentations based on group needs, covering topics such as parental involvement, student motivation, behavior management, students on the autism spectrum, and termination of care during summer months.</p> <p data-bbox="490 898 1086 1026">A core component of this work includes PBIS and trauma-engaged coaching and training, as well as continuous support to address identified health and safety needs, including crisis response.</p> <p data-bbox="490 1031 1112 1087">Partners: School districts, AMHTA, AASB, AMHB, DBH, DPH, NWPBIS, SRS Team</p>	<div data-bbox="1268 516 1404 653" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="1279 695 1393 726">Continue</p>
	<p data-bbox="490 1104 1086 1167">Alaska Trauma Recovery Demonstration Grant (TRDG)</p> <p data-bbox="490 1205 1112 1467">TRDG was a five-year (2019–2024) federal grant awarded to DEED by the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) to expand delivery of mental health services to students who have experienced trauma and are struggling in school as a result. The work was carried out by the Alaska Child Trauma Center and the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District (FNSBSD).</p> <p data-bbox="490 1472 1115 1770">The grant successfully connected students who had experienced trauma with community providers. Of the 125 students who received services through this grant and had sufficient attendance data for comparison, 61 (48.8 percent) showed improved attendance in the year after starting services, while 64 (51.2 percent) did not show improved attendance.</p> <p data-bbox="490 1707 1115 1770">Partners: USDOE, Alaska Behavioral Health Agency, FNSBSD, UAA/CHD</p> <p data-bbox="490 1774 959 1803"><u>See Alaska TRDG Final Report 8-19-25</u></p>	<div data-bbox="1268 1346 1404 1482" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="1219 1524 1455 1556">Grant ended FY25</p>

STRATEGY FY2017	PROGRESS	RECOMMENDATION
 <p>Increase access to nursing and counseling services.</p>	<p>Advancing Wellness and Resiliency in Education (AWARE) DEED has managed two five-year Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Project AWARE grants, covering 2014–2019 and 2020–2025. The purpose of Project AWARE is to develop a sustainable infrastructure for school-based mental health programs and services. The program expects recipients to build collaborative partnerships that include the State Education Agency (SEA), Local Education Agencies (LEAs), the State Mental Health Agency (SMHA), community-based behavioral health providers, school personnel, community organizations, families, and school-aged youth. Partners: SAMHSA; USS/CHS; Anchorage School District (ASD); Kenai Peninsula Borough School District (KPBSD); Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District (MSBSD); Fairbanks North Star Borough School District (FNSBSD); Juneau School District (JSD); Bering Strait School District (BSSD); Consortium for Alaska Rural Service (CARS) <i>See Alaska Project AWARE I Final Report</i></p>	 <p>Grant ended FY25</p>
 <p>Increase awareness of, and provide supports for, the mental and physical health needs of children in our schools.</p>	<p>Safety & Well-Being Summit DEED hosted the Safety and Well-Being Summit in 2018, 2019, 2023, 2024, and 2025. This event brings together educational leaders, key staff, and strategic stakeholders, including representatives from every district across the state, to focus on improving school safety and well-being in Alaska. Participants learn and share strategies to promote healthy development, strengthen school climate, and prepare for potential crises. Key topics have included educator wellness, culturally responsive practices, positive school climate (PBIS), suicide prevention, behavioral health in schools, social-emotional learning, instructional tools to improve academic success, school health, school safety, emergency operations planning, health and safety-related policies, the Alaska Safe Children’s Act, belonging, resilience, and recovery. Partners: DOH (DPH, DBH), DPS, AASB, CARS, SERRC, DVSA, SRS, ESSA, GES, UAA, Tribal Health, FBI, DMVA, NWPBIS, AMHTA, school districts</p>	 <p>Continue</p>

STRATEGY FY2017	PROGRESS	RECOMMENDATION
<div data-bbox="203 924 341 1060" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="102 1098 440 1260">Increase awareness of, and provide supports for, the mental and physical health needs of children in our schools.</p>	<div data-bbox="483 191 766 220" data-label="Section-Header"> <p>School Health ECHOs</p> </div> <p data-bbox="483 224 1166 453">The Department supported School Health ECHOs during the pandemic in partnership with the DOH and Social Services (DHSS) to provide school staff with medical and practical support. These sessions continue today with funding from DOH, while DEED remains involved in planning and ongoing support. Partners: DOH, UAA/CHD</p> <p data-bbox="483 457 1101 525"><u>See UAA CHD Project ECHO School Health ECHO Series-Spanning Curriculum FY21-FY26</u></p> <div data-bbox="483 541 946 606" data-label="Section-Header"> <p>Alaska School Counselor Association Annual Conference</p> </div> <p data-bbox="483 611 1172 909">The Alaska School Counselor Association (AkSCA) holds an annual conference to provide professional development, resources, and support for school counselors across the state. School counselors play a vital role in supporting students’ well-being and academic achievement. To assist these efforts, a member of the DEED Health and Safety Team serves on the conference planning committee and participates in monthly meetings. Partners: AkSCA Board</p> <div data-bbox="483 926 823 957" data-label="Section-Header"> <p>Alaska Safe Children’s Act</p> </div> <p data-bbox="483 961 1172 1430">Erin’s Law requires the governing body of each school district to adopt and implement a policy, establish a training program for employees and students, and provide parent notices relating to sexual abuse and sexual assault awareness and prevention for students in grades K–12. Bree’s Law requires the department, in consultation with school districts, to develop and approve a program on teen dating violence and abuse awareness and prevention for grades 7–12. State-developed curriculum for grades 7–12 is managed through the eLearning system and is currently under review after its initial launch in 2020. In the 2024–2025 school year, approximately 12,000 students in grades 7–12 completed the five-course series, totaling about 59,000 hours of instruction.</p> <p data-bbox="483 1434 1172 1631">One goal of the statute is to increase educator awareness of mandatory reporting requirements. Recent data from the Office of Children’s Services shows that educator reports of child sexual abuse have risen significantly since the law’s passage, aligning with research from states that have implemented similar legislation.</p> <p data-bbox="483 1635 1172 1766">A second goal is to reduce dating violence. However, Youth Risk Behavior Survey data show no significant change in reported dating violence among Alaskan teens since the statute’s passage, mirroring national trends.</p> <p data-bbox="483 1770 1172 1820">Partners: School districts, AASB, CDVSA, DPH, Strategic Preventions, EdgePoint</p> <p data-bbox="483 1824 1166 1875"><u>See Alaska Safe Children’s Act Evaluation - Opinions and Experiences of Alaskan Educators</u></p> <p data-bbox="483 1879 1172 1929"><u>See also Alaska Safe Children’s Act Implementation Guide School and District, Alaska Safe Children’s Act Implementation Guide for Teachers</u></p>	<div data-bbox="1295 955 1437 1092" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="1312 1129 1421 1159">Continue</p>

STRATEGY FY2017	PROGRESS	RECOMMENDATION
<div data-bbox="201 852 341 993" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="86 1031 459 1209">Increase and promote partnerships between schools and community and tribal nursing/health and counseling services.</p>	<p data-bbox="487 207 807 239">E-cigarette Use or Vaping</p> <p data-bbox="487 275 1169 806">The DOH and Social Services (DHSS) approached DEED to join an initiative aimed at preventing and mitigating student vaping. The rise in e-cigarette use had become a school problem, disrupting instruction through suspensions and other diversions of resources. The Health and Safety Team identified this as an opportunity to better connect schools with resources available from the DOH. In November 2021, the DHSS Tobacco Team released a document outlining alternatives to suspension related to vaping. An eLearning course for educators on e-cigarettes was also developed in partnership with the DOH tobacco and marijuana team. As of August 2025, more than 600 certificates had been awarded. DOH partners report that approximately 10 districts have incorporated vaping education and/or policy updates supported through DOH grants.</p> <p data-bbox="487 812 1169 1010">DOH also produced and distributed thousands of educational materials to schools based on orders received. Through the DEED partnership, DOH was able to identify middle school, particularly grade 8, as the peak age for tobacco/vaping suspensions and develop targeted materials for middle and elementary schools.</p> <p data-bbox="487 1014 1127 1068">Partners: DOH, American Lung Association, school districts See Resources for Youth</p>	<div data-bbox="1297 911 1437 1052" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="1313 1087 1422 1115">Continue</p>
	<p data-bbox="487 1173 1154 1236">Rural School Counselor/School Social Worker/School Nurse Community of Practice</p> <p data-bbox="487 1274 1174 1505">Supported by resources from DBH and DPH, this group partners with Seattle Children’s Hospital and the University of Washington. Rural school counselors, school social workers, and school nurses are invited to attend monthly meetings. During these sessions, Seattle Children’s provides speakers who address specific concerns identified by the group.</p> <p data-bbox="487 1512 1143 1671">The goal of the Community of Practice is to strengthen support for rural and remote school counselors, school social workers, and school nurses, helping them better serve their schools while also reducing turnover in these critical roles.</p> <p data-bbox="487 1677 1170 1770">Partners: PalPak, Seattle Children’s Hospital See Identifying and treating Childhood Hearing Loss in Rural Alaska—The Hearing Norton Sound Study</p>	

STRATEGY FY2017	PROGRESS	RECOMMENDATION
<div data-bbox="203 840 341 982" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="84 1018 461 1199">Increase and promote partnerships between schools and community and tribal nursing/health and counseling services.</p>	<div data-bbox="483 191 727 226" data-label="Section-Header"> <h3>Vision & Hearing</h3> </div> <p data-bbox="483 228 1174 663">As part of its collaboration with DOH, the Health and Safety Team has worked with school nurse consultants on vision and hearing screening. The need to support screening was underscored by the July 2022 study <i>Identifying and Treating Childhood Hearing Loss in Rural Alaska – The Hearing Norton Sound Study</i>. While the study focused on closing the loop between screening and treatment for hearing loss, it also highlighted a significant finding directly connected to DEED’s efforts to improve reading: 790 of 1,481 students (53%) were determined to need a follow-up.</p> <p data-bbox="483 665 1154 993">At the Safety and Well-Being Summit, DOH provided training and equipment to districts to strengthen screening processes. Rural districts made up most participants. This effort will be repeated at the 2025 Summit, and new eLearning courses have been launched to train school staff in screening procedures. DEED has also connected DOH with SERRC, creating additional opportunities to expand screening support.</p> <p data-bbox="483 995 1146 1085">Partners: DOH, Southcentral Foundation See Identifying and treating Childhood Hearing Loss in Rural Alaska—The Hearing Norton Sound Study</p> <div data-bbox="483 1098 915 1134" data-label="Section-Header"> <h3>School Behavioral Health Team</h3> </div> <p data-bbox="483 1169 1159 1535">In December 2019, the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority (AMHTA) convened a group of statewide stakeholders, including state partners, to discuss mental health in schools. One of the main findings from this meeting was that many organizations did not have a clear understanding of what districts were already doing. Following this, AMHTA formed a state partner-level behavioral health in schools’ group, which has continued to meet over the past several years. AMHTA contracted with Stellar Group to conduct an environmental scan of district activities using an MTSS model.</p> <p data-bbox="483 1537 1114 1635">In FY2025, Stellar Group and DEED hosted a School Mental Health Community of Practice, which will continue in FY2026.</p> <p data-bbox="483 1638 1170 1818">Partners: AMHTA, AMHB, DBH, DPH, Stellar Group, CDVSA See Alaska Mental Health Supports in Schools Community of Practice Report 2024-2025 See also Mental Health in Alaska Schools Phase-1-Landscape-Assessment, Mental Health in Schools Assessment Addendum 1-School District Profiles</p>	<div data-bbox="1295 898 1437 1041" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="1312 1075 1422 1104">Continue</p>

STRATEGY FY2017	PROGRESS	RECOMMENDATION
 <p>Increase and promote partnerships between schools and community and tribal nursing/health and counseling services.</p>	<p>Healthy Schools Learning Collaborative This initiative includes a quarterly meeting co-chaired by DEED and DOH (Healthy Schools Specialist). The meetings provide a forum for sharing work related to school health and wellness and for leveraging resources in support of schools. The two departments also offered an ongoing professional development series for Alaska educators during the COVID-19 pandemic, addressing various health topics. Virtual sessions (recorded) continue throughout each school year and cover areas such as mental health, staff wellness, school health, trauma-engaged practice, school climate and relationship skill building, and more. A recent example is an August 2025 product from DOH that supports DEED’s chronic absenteeism campaign. Partners: DOH, Department of Public Safety, various NGOs as needed See Alaska Issue Brief Absenteeism</p> <p>ALCAN Link This ongoing project, supported by DEED and DOH commissioners, follows cohorts of Alaska-born children as they progress through the life course. It links administrative data from prenatal surveys of mothers with records from OCS and DEED. Results have been published in multiple journal articles and are being used to develop clinical tools for providers. The data also offer promising insights for practical interventions related to reading, school readiness, and broader academic outcomes. Partner: DOH See Early Childhood Experiences</p>	 <p>Continue</p>
 <p>Increase and support partnerships between schools and law enforcement agencies.</p>	<p>School Safety Over the past three years, the DEED Health and Safety Team has expanded its work with SERRC on school safety initiatives. In FY2026, the team will support an ongoing safety Community of Practice focused on the development of Threat Assessment Teams and other district-identified safety topics. SERRC and DEED staff will launch this effort in partnership with Homeland Security and FBI personnel at the 2025 School Safety and Well-Being Summit. Partners: DOH, Homeland Security, DPS See Valdez Threat Assessment Guidebook 2.8 See Early Childhood Experiences</p>	

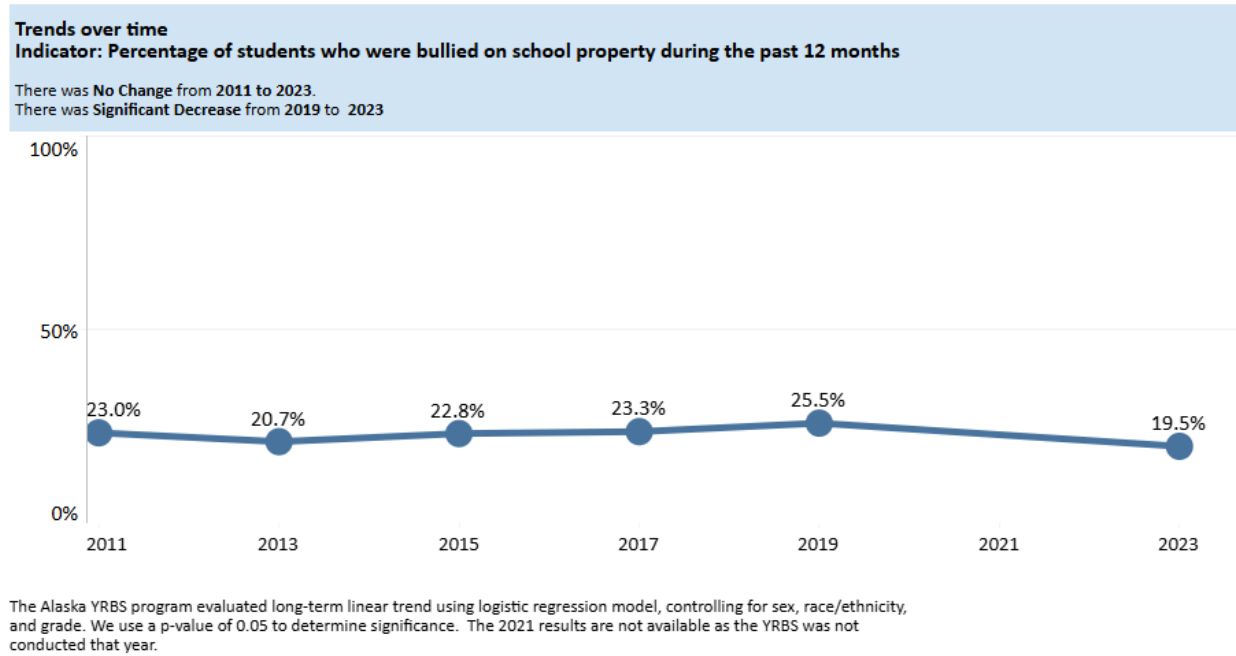
STRATEGY FY2017	PROGRESS	RECOMMENDATION
<div data-bbox="203 304 341 445"></div> <p data-bbox="131 478 412 621">Increase and support partnerships between schools and law enforcement agencies.</p>	<p data-bbox="485 216 859 249">Mass Casualty Event Work</p> <p data-bbox="485 289 1175 646">In partnership with the FBI and other law enforcement agencies, DEED has supported planning efforts related to mass casualty events. While these plans will hopefully never need to be used, it was discovered that the supporting website had been funded by an individual’s personal funds. DEED staff connected the project with SERRC, which was able to secure funding to host the site. The transition is expected to be completed in FY2026. Partners: DOH, Homeland Security, DPS</p>	<div data-bbox="1297 583 1435 724"></div> <p data-bbox="1313 758 1419 785">Continue</p>
<div data-bbox="203 714 341 854"></div> <p data-bbox="99 852 440 1152">Develop micro-credentialing opportunities for educators in high-impact areas such as cultural literacy, trauma-informed instruction, STEM, Alaska’s English language arts and math standards, and text analysis.</p>	<p data-bbox="485 808 964 842">Micro-Credentialing Opportunities</p> <p data-bbox="485 846 1175 1058">Since 2017, DEED has created 34 continuing education credits courses across the Alaska Reads Act literacy (19), ELA/Math standards (1), and trauma-informed instruction (13) and has issued over 2,400 CEU certificates. See Appendix 3 for the full course list.</p>	

Data and Progress Indicators

Student Reports of Bullying on School Property: 2011–2023

The specific indicator question (students missing school due to feeling unsafe) is no longer included on Alaska’s YRBS. The closest related measure (student reports of being bullied on school property) is reported below.

The chart shows the percentage of students in traditional high schools who reported being bullied on school property during the past 12 months. Rates declined from 25.5 percent in 2019 to 19.5 percent in 2023, and by 3.5 percent overall from 2011 to 2023.



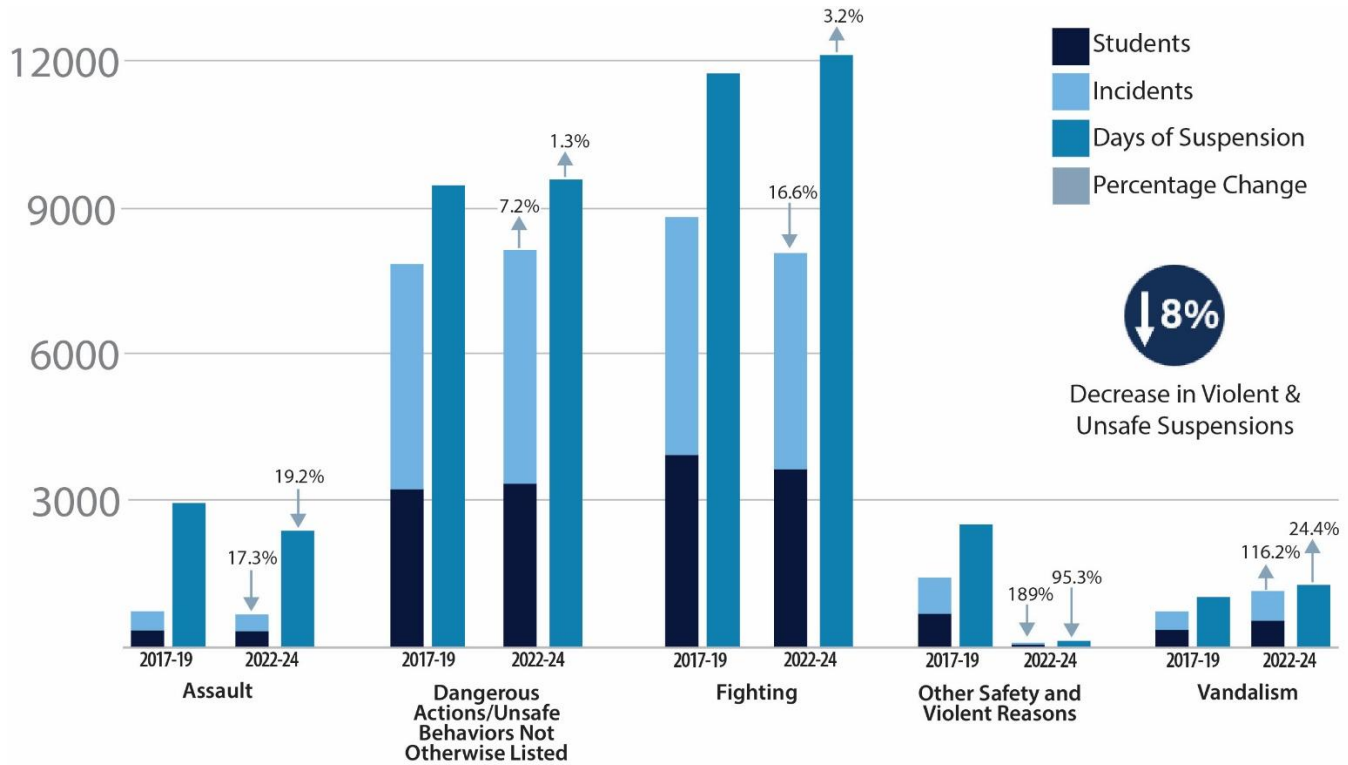
In-School and Out-of-School Suspensions: 2017–2019 Compared to 2022–2024

The table below compares statewide suspension data from 2017–2019 and 2022–2024. It includes both the number of students and incidents for in-school and out-of-school suspensions across major categories, as well as changes in total suspension days.

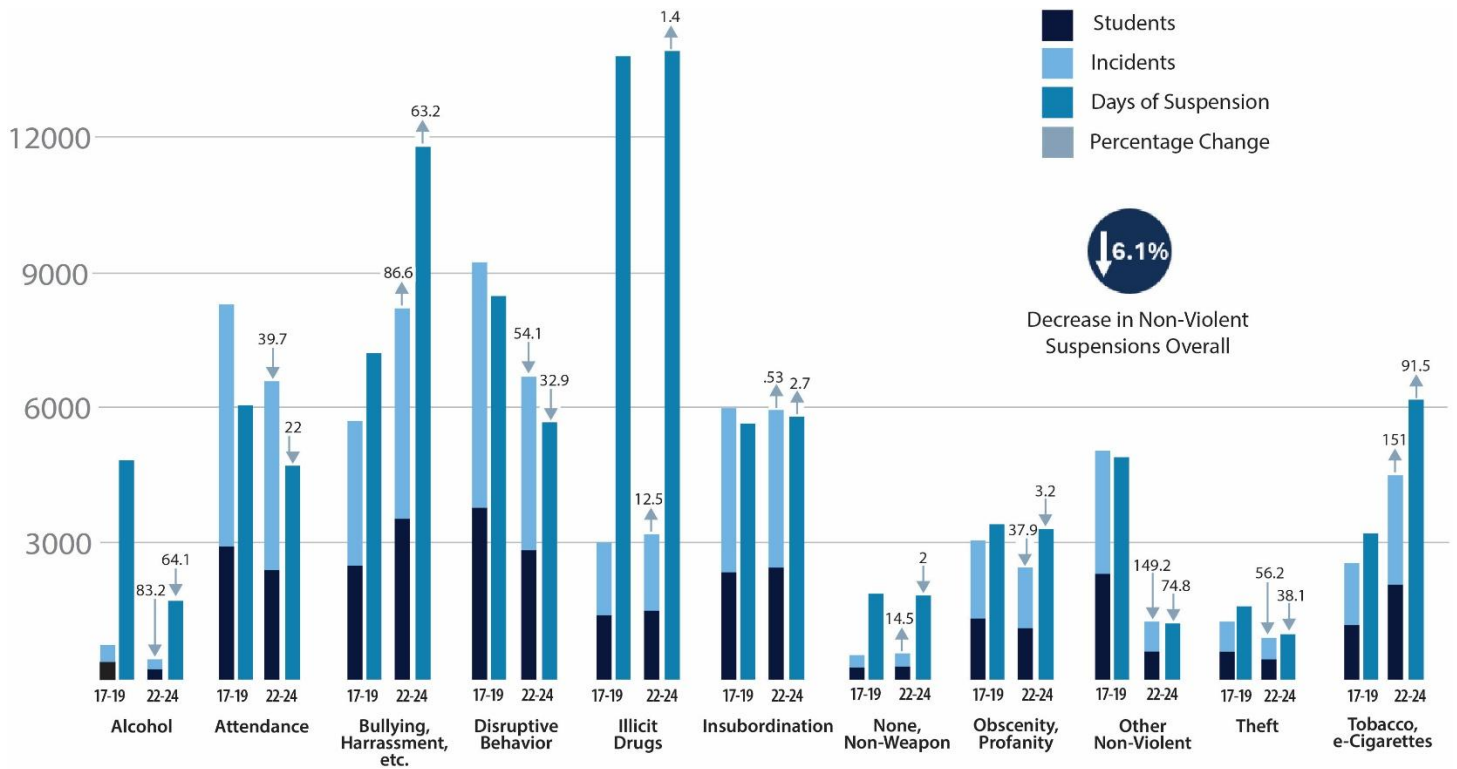
Overall, the total number of students suspended declined by nearly 12 percent when comparing the combined years 2017–2018 and 2018–2019 (pre-COVID) with 2022–2023 and 2023–2024 (post-COVID recovery).

While reductions were seen across most categories, suspensions related to bullying, harassment, intimidation, and cyberbullying increased by approximately 41 percent, indicating a continued need for targeted prevention and intervention efforts. The data also show that attendance-related suspensions and other nonviolent incidents remain areas for improvement.

In/Out of School Suspensions 2017-19 Compared to 2022-24 | *Violent & Unsafe*



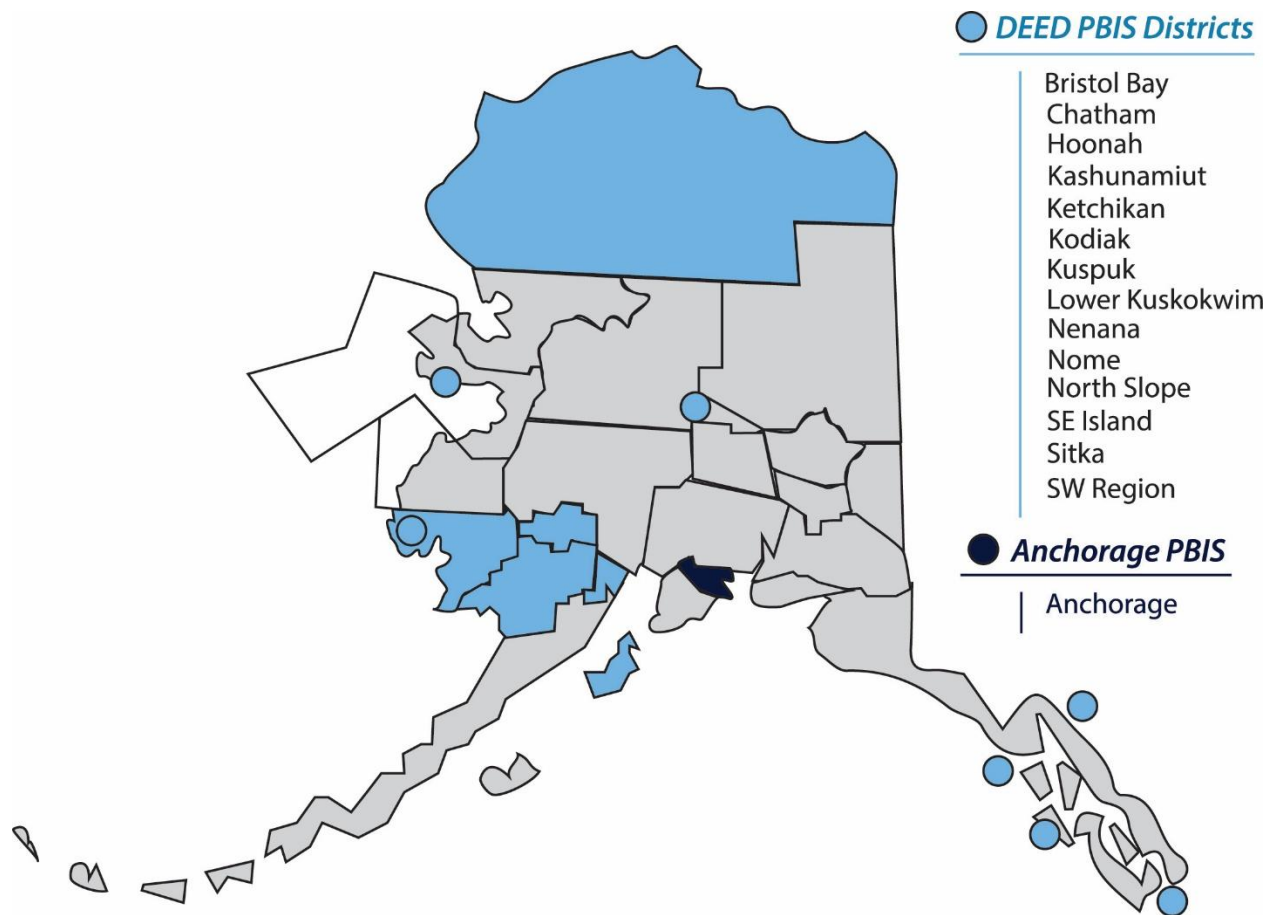
In/Out of School Suspensions 2017-19 Compared to 2022-24 | *Non-Violent*



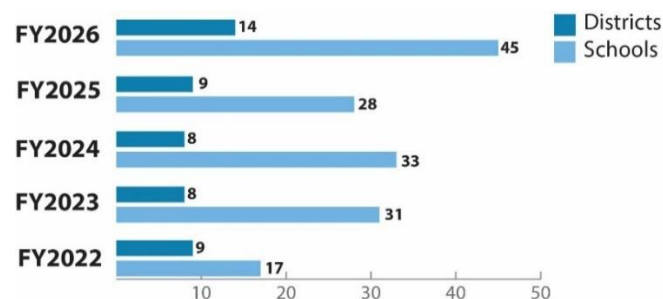
Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is a framework that helps schools establish proactive systems to promote positive behavior, improve school climate, and reduce disciplinary incidents. The Department's Health and Safety Team leads this work, providing coaching, training, and ongoing technical assistance to districts implementing PBIS. The approach emphasizes data-informed decision-making, consistent expectations, and tiered support for students and staff.

Participation in PBIS continues to expand across the state. As of FY2026, 14 districts and 45 schools are participating in the Alaska PBIS Project. This represents steady growth from nine districts and 17 schools in FY2022. The accompanying figures show the number of districts and schools participating each year, as well as a map of current PBIS sites statewide.



of Districts Participating in DEED/PBIS | By Fiscal Year



Programs, Initiatives, and Investments

Physical Activity and Nutrition Initiatives and Partnerships

The Department of Education & Early Development (DEED) and the Department of Health (DOH) work together to support student physical health through coordinated efforts that promote physical activity and nutrition in schools. This collaboration includes joint professional development and technical assistance through events like the School Safety and Well-Being Summit and the monthly Alaska School Health Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes (School Health ECHO) series. Recent sessions have addressed topics such as school wellness policies, culturally relevant approaches to physical activity and nutrition, food insecurity and learning, and using Youth Risk Behavior Survey and School Health Profiles data to guide local planning. The departments also co-develop and promote School Health Issue Briefs, which describe how physical activity and nutrition influence student success and provide Alaska-specific data and resources for educators. DEED's eLearning platform hosts related trainings, including courses on local school wellness policies, Smart Snacks nutrition standards, and physical activity and nutrition guidelines for early childhood programs. Health-related updates, trainings, and program opportunities, such as the Healthy Futures Physical Activity Challenge, are regularly shared with school districts through the DEED Information Exchange and statewide listservs.

This partnership also supports schools through resources, data collection, and statewide initiatives. The departments collaborate to administer key surveys such as the Youth Risk Behavior Survey and School Health Profiles to monitor trends in physical activity, nutrition, and related health practices. DOH distributes free educational materials to schools, including posters and parent resources promoting physical activity, water and milk consumption, and participation in the Healthy Futures Challenge. DEED promotes these efforts and supports implementation at the district level. The two departments operate under a Memorandum of Agreement, which aligns physical activity, nutrition, and chronic disease prevention efforts in schools. Over the past decade, collaboration has also included co-presenting at statewide conferences, supporting development of Alaska's Physical Education Standards and School Wellness Model Policy, and coordinating statewide partners through the Interagency Alaska School Health Collaborative. These coordinated investments allow both departments to align expertise, resources, and data to improve student physical health and support conditions for learning.

Strive for 5 Attendance Initiative

Based on direction from the SBOE, the Department created an interdisciplinary team, led by the Health and Safety team, to develop the Strive for 5 Attendance Initiative. This initiative promotes consistent school attendance by encouraging students to attend school every single day and supports districts in addressing chronic absenteeism.

The Department's interdisciplinary team coordinated efforts across divisions to align messaging, share attendance data, and provide communication tools that districts can adapt for local use. The initiative emphasizes the importance of attendance as a foundation for student achievement and well-being. It also builds on partnerships with districts, families, and community organizations to reinforce the message that showing up to school everyday matters.

As the initiative moves forward, the Department continues to provide technical assistance, share promising practices, and collaborate with districts to identify effective interventions that improve student attendance and engagement.

Legislation, Regulations, and Board Actions

House Bill 57: Use of Wireless Telecommunication Devices During the School Day

In 2025, the Alaska Legislature enacted [HB 57](#)³³, establishing statewide limits on student use of wireless telecommunication devices, including cell phones, tablets, and similar personal devices, during the school day. The legislation prohibits students from using these devices during instructional hours unless authorized by school personnel for educational purposes or for emergency use. The bill was introduced in response to growing concern about the effects of device use and social media on student learning, attendance, and well-being.

The law provides statewide consistency while allowing school districts flexibility to develop local policies that meet the intent of the statute. It reflects a legislative commitment to supporting focused learning environments, reducing classroom distractions, and strengthening student engagement.

SBOE Resolution | *Cell Phone Use in Schools*

Prior to the passage of HB 57, the SBOE adopted a [resolution](#)³⁴ in October 2024 encouraging Alaska school districts to limit or prohibit student cell phone use during the school day. The Board cited evidence linking cell phone use to classroom distraction, cyberbullying, and decreased student engagement. The resolution emphasized the importance of clear local policies that protect instructional time and promote student focus and interpersonal connection.

SBOE Action | *Attendance Awareness*

In December 2024, Commissioner Deena Bishop provided the SBOE with a report on student attendance and chronic absenteeism in Alaska’s public schools. The report highlighted that during the 2022–2023 school year, approximately 45 percent of Alaska students were chronically absent, meaning they missed more than 10 percent of the school year. Commissioner Bishop emphasized that chronic absenteeism is a significant factor affecting reading proficiency, academic performance, and graduation outcomes.

Following the presentation, the SBOE identified chronic absenteeism as a statewide concern and directed the Department to increase its focus on attendance improvement efforts. The Board requested the Department develop resources and supports to assist districts in addressing barriers to regular attendance and promoting consistent student participation in school.

³³ House Bill 57, *An Act making appropriations for the operating and loan program expenses of state government and for certain programs; capitalizing funds; making reappropriations; and providing for an effective date* (33rd Leg., 1st Sess. 2023). Retrieved on October 13, 2025, from <https://www.akleg.gov/basis/Bill/Detail/33?Root=hb57>

³⁴ Alaska State Board of Education. (2024, October). Resolution 2024-02: Limiting Student Cell Phone Use in Alaska Public Schools. Retrieved from https://education.alaska.gov/state_board/pdf/10-2024%20Resolution%20Cell%20Phones.pdf

Conclusion

Since its adoption in 2017, the AEC has served as a guiding framework for continuous improvement across the state's public education system. Grounded in collaboration among educators, families, students, tribal leaders, and community partners, the Challenge established five priorities that continue to shape Alaska's educational landscape: early literacy, CTE, closing achievement gaps, educator effectiveness, and student well-being.

Over the past eight years, Alaska has seen meaningful progress in each of these areas. The passage of the Alaska Reads Act in 2022 created a unified statewide structure for early literacy, with early indicators showing upward trends in student proficiency and increased access to evidence-based instruction and interventions. CTE programs have expanded and modernized, with students who participated in a CTE concentrator achieving a 98 percent four-year graduation rate, demonstrating the effectiveness of applied, workforce-aligned learning pathways.

Partnerships with Tribes have strengthened through the introduction of State-Tribal Education Compacting legislation, marking a historic step toward greater local control and culturally grounded education. Efforts to grow Alaska's own educators have accelerated through the Teacher Registered Apprenticeship Program (T-RAP), now operating in more than half of Alaska's school districts, and the development of the Principal Registered Apprenticeship Pathway (P-RAP) to build future leaders. In addition, districts and schools across the state have expanded Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), creating safer learning environments that foster attendance, engagement, and student success.

While these accomplishments are significant, the work ahead remains essential. Continued focus is needed to ensure every student reads proficiently by third grade, graduates prepared for life and work, and is supported by a strong, stable, and locally rooted educator workforce.

The Department recommends maintaining the five strategic priorities of the AEC as the foundation for continued improvement. Built on the strength of broad stakeholder engagement, the Challenge represents a shared vision among Alaskans for how to strengthen the state's public education system.

To continue this progress, the Department recommends each standing committee of the SBOE develop specific goals aligned to these priorities. These goals will form the basis of a strategic plan that guides the Board's direction and drives the work of the Department. By using this framework to focus resources, strengthen accountability and transparency, and build on the progress achieved, Alaska can continue advancing toward its commitment to provide an excellent education for every student every day.

Appendices

Appendix A: eLearning Courses to Support Administrators

Courses developed to support administrators in implementation of the Alaska Read's Act:

- [Building Oral Language and Phonology for Administrator](#)
- [Creating Fluent Readers for Administrators](#)
- [Developing Vocabulary for Administrators](#)
- [Exploring Phonics and Word Study for Administrators](#)
- [Increasing Reading Comprehension for Administrators](#)
- [Science of Reading for Administrators, PCG](#)
- [Science of Reading for Leaders, NWEA](#)
- [Understanding the Science of Reading for Administrators](#)

Appendix B: Continuing Education Course List

Reads Act Literacy Courses

- [Alaska Reading Playbook](#)
- [Building Oral Language and Phonology for Administrator](#)
- [Comprehension—Deriving Meaning from Text](#)
- [Creating Fluent Readers for Administrators](#)
- [Developing Vocabulary for Administrators](#)
- [Exploring Phonics and Word Study for Administrators](#)
- [Fluency—The Role of Accuracy, Rate and Expression](#)
- [Heggerty](#)
- [Increasing Reading Comprehension for Administrators](#)
- [Keys to Beginning Reading \(Keys to Literacy, Asynchronous\)](#)
- [mCLASS DIBELS 8 Calibration](#)
[Phonics—Sounds and Symbols](#)
- [Phonological Awareness—The Foundation for Reading Skills](#)
- [Science of Reading for Administrators, PCG](#)
- [Science of Reading for Leaders, NWEA](#)
- [Student-Focused Coaching](#)
- [UFLI Foundations](#)
- [Understanding the Science of Reading for Administrators](#)
- [Vocabulary—Find Meaning in the Words we Read](#)

Alaska's English Language Arts and Math Standards,

- [Three Instructional Shifts in Mathematics](#)

Trauma-Informed Instruction Courses

- [Overcoming ACEs in Alaskan Schools](#)
- [Overcoming Anxiety and Stress in Alaskan Schools](#)
- [Trauma-Engaged and Practicing Schools](#)
- [Trauma-Sensitive Schools](#)
- [Childhood Traumatic Grief](#)
- [Classroom Practices](#)
- [Emotional Intelligence](#)
- [Family Partnerships](#)
- [Mind-Body Connections](#)
- [Self-Regulation](#)
- [Self-Care](#)
- [Trauma-Engaged Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health](#)
- [Understanding Homelessness](#)