

Mike Hanley
Commissioner

P.O. Box 110500
Juneau, AK 99811-0500
education.alaska.gov



Eric Fry
Information Officer

907.465.2851
cell: 907.321.5564
eric.fry@alaska.gov

Press Release

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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State Board Adopts Regulations and Resolutions

JUNEAU -- The State Board of Education & Early Development, meeting Dec. 10 and 11 in Anchorage, adopted four regulation packages, repealed a regulation, sent out for public comment proposed arts standards, and adopted three resolutions.

The board adopted regulations to:

- Require school districts to offer students in grades 9-12 the opportunity to challenge courses, meaning to receive credit by demonstrating their knowledge of the courses' content without taking the courses. School districts are free to let students in grades 7 and 8 challenge courses, but districts are not required to do so. The board's regulation aligns with a recent change in state statute.
- Allow advanced nurse practitioners to diagnose fetal alcohol spectrum disorder and other health impairments to determine student eligibility for special education and related services. The regulation also explicitly includes fetal alcohol spectrum disorder in the list of chronic or acute health problems that may make a student eligible for special education and related services as a child with other health impairments. Prior to the regulation, students with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder already were eligible for special education and related services. Health professionals requested the regulations.
- Change the guidelines for the participation of special education students and English language learners in assessments. The changes provide allowable accommodations for students taking new computer-based assessments.
- Require a subject exam or content-area exam for each endorsement on a teaching certificate, and expand the approved list of basic competency exams to include the SAT and ACT. The regulation also implements new teacher trainings required under a recent state law.

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The board repealed a regulation that required school districts to test students for early literacy skills. The state recently repealed funding for such testing.

The board declined to take up a proposed repeal of a regulation about the expenditure of school funds to influence elections. The current regulation stands.

The board sent out for public comment proposed new standards for the arts. Copies of the proposed standards and ways to comment will be posted at <http://education.alaska.gov> later this month. The board will consider the proposed standards in March.

The board passed three resolutions: to recommend repeal of the statutory requirement that school districts spend at least 70 percent of their operating funds on instruction; to recommend funding for cooperative agreement grants to school districts, as provided for in statute; and to support no change to the minimum student count for funding as a separate school.

The board also approved renewal of the charter for Rilke Schule Charter School and approved an initial charter for STrEaM Academy Charter School, both in Anchorage.

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