

Alaska State Board of Education & Early Development
Not Approved Minutes
October 23, 2019
Audio/Work session originating in Juneau, Alaska

Wednesday, October 23, 2019

Chair Fields called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. After the pledge of allegiance, the board adopted the agenda for October 23, 2019. Member Griffin moved to adopt the agenda. First Vice Chair Hamilton seconded the motion. Lt. Colonel Hammill was excused from the roll. Student Advisory Member Mainard was not present. There were no potential conflicts of interest identified.

Work Session

Agenda Item 1. Commissioner's Report. Commissioner Johnson welcomed the board to the call and explained the format for the day's meeting as an overview of the reading grant, an overview of the mental health grant, and a report from the Alaska Federation of Natives Convention.

Director Van Wyhe discussed a federal comprehensive literacy state development (CLSD) grant that DEED received. October 1st department was awarded 20.7 million dollars over 5 years from the United States Department of education. The goal of the grant is to expand literacy skills for students across all grades. This grant speaks to the goal of the Alaska Education Challenge to support students reading by third grade. There are two components to the grant. First for state activities but the bulk of the money will go to support districts. The grant will support a comprehensive state literacy program as well as to support district literacy grants.

DEED staff met to shape the grant application process as well as to ensure that this grant will support the third grade reading goal.

Will go to districts who provide a solid plan for students who demonstrate the highest need. It will be through a competitive process. Call for applications went out 10/11, 11/1 complete grant application is due to DEED.

One of the big pieces of this grant is staffing needs. The grant application will detail how the vision shapes the various staffing and professional development within a school district.

Of the \$20.7 million that was awarded, DEED has been given \$4.9 million for this current year. Although the timeline is short but the management plan with USDOE indicates that we will have grants out to districts quickly. DEED is looking at geographic areas as well as the size of the districts who are applying. DEED is working hard on all fronts and they are excited about the districts who have expressed interest in the grant.

DEED will award up to 12 grants and will give more details on those individuals at the December board meeting

Member Van Diest expressed excitement as well as acknowledged the work that DEED will need to do. She asked about the dollar amount of the grants that were to be awarded to schools. Director Van Wyhe responded that it depends on the size of the school. She'll send the RFA out to the board for them to review.

Member Hamilton asked how the department accessed the grant, ie who to thank? Commissioner Johnson responded that the department does not have a dedicated team of grant writers but acknowledged those in DEED who work on grants. Specifically for the reading grant, Commissioner Johnson thanked Deb Riddle, Tammy Van Wyhe and Karen Melin.

Member Kowalski- asked about the quick turnaround time for the applicants, what outreach has been going on to reach out to districts who might not be able to meet the deadline? Director Van Wyhe responded that there have been two technical assistance calls to walk districts through the grant as well as have encouraged districts to contact them directly. While there hasn't been any new support created for this specifically, but the reading proficiency has been a top priority of the department and DEED has done much outreach to discuss the issue.

Member Stockhausen- asked about the number of grants awarded, if a district could apply for next year if they don't get a grant this year. Director Van Wyhe responded that as of now, no. The grant is for the full five years. If there is a federal grant that comes up next year, the department will pursue it.

Member Griffin asked about the portion of the grant that is allocated to the department. Director Van Wyhe informed the board that DEED is planning a statewide convening to advance literacy support. They will also be looking at certification of teachers to ensure practices that will ensure childhood literacy. They will look at professional development through their State System of Support coaches throughout the State. Only 5% is allowed for state activities, 95% goes to the schools.

She will provide a more detailed report at the December 4th meeting

Commissioner Johnson is very excited about the opportunity. DEED is willing to meet districts and help with the application process to get that money to students to help them as quickly as possible.

Sharon Fishel of the health and safety team presented to the board about the Trauma Recovery Demonstration Grant out of the U.S. Department of Education. It is a 5 million grant with 1 million being awarded for the next five years. DEED will collaborate w/ AK trauma center to hire five clinicians to be in four schools to provide evidence based trauma specific services to students. Will be working with Lathrop, Ryan Middle, Hunter Elementary, and Arctic Light schools as they had the most students who met the requirements as well as the fact that Arctic Light was on a military base.

Any student in the borough can request services with the clinicians.

DEED is working on a rollout package but the plan right now is to allocate 85% of the funding to go to provide services, and 15% of the funding going to DEED and to FAI to hire a part time person to help the community with the grant.

Sharon gave an overview of the requirements that have been set forth in the grant and detailed to the board the work that the department is doing to satisfy those requirements.

CJ thanked the team and the FAI school district for partnering. He is looking forward to being able to extend this service to the students across the state

Mem Kowalski expressed her excitement of the broad reach and the goals of the grant.

Chair Fields echoed Member Kowalski's comment about being able to bring some of the services in and addressing the challenges of bringing those services together with regards to the mental health of students.

Member Kowalski updated the board on her opportunity to speak as part of an educational panel and Joel Isaac continued the discussion on his panel.

She was encouraged by the safe and friendly audience that was in the room and highlighted the fact that indigenous people have not often been in safe spaces and highlighted the intentional work that tribal leaders did to return AFN to the safe space. She expressed her hope that as we continue discussions about tribal compacting to remember that Alaska Native leaders should take ownership of education of their students and that the conversations should take place in a safe space. She updated the audience of the work that the Alaska State Board of Education as well as the Tribal Compacting committee outreach and information gathering with regards to tribal compacting. She informed the audience that the public will have an opportunities to comment to the Tribal Compacting committee in the future. She reminded the board of the importance of building relationships with the State of Alaska

and tribes as this process develops. She reminded the board to respect the language, culture, and identity of Alaska Native leaders as we continue this process.

Joel Isaac added that there was a lot of excitement surrounding Governor Dunleavy's announcement regarding Tribal Compacting. He did a workshop with USDOE Office of Indian Education regarding what education should be and what it is surrounding Alaska Native students. He highlighted the success of tackling difficult issues while still being respectful and solutions based with Native leaders and State of Alaska staff. We can have these charged discussions that are respectful but a safe space must exist in which to have them. He updated the board on the follow up requests that he has received and they will discuss that feedback at their next Tribal Compacting committee.

Compacting is a big conversation but the department is working to set a solid foundation and is committed to taking the time needed to ensure that it is done right.

Member Kowalski reminded the board that if they receive feedback to please send them to Joel as he is compiling them.

Commissioner Johnson thanked both Member Kowalski and Joel and expressed his appreciation to the work on the Tribal Compacting committee to make sure there is plenty of opportunity to get input as we go through this process.

Chair Fields thanked them and noted that they represented the board well and agreed that the board is here to support this effort and want to do what is best for the students in the state of Alaska.

Commissioner Johnson introduced Rochelle Lindley to the board and gave a brief background of her marketing experience.

Board Comments

Chair Fields thanked the department for their updates and their work. He encouraged the board to stay positive during these times of budget concerns and asked if the board had other comments.

There were no other board comments

The meeting adjourned at 3:52pm