

State Board of Education and Early Development

Annual Report to the Alaska State Legislature

January 2020



State Board of Education and Early Development

James Fields, Chair

Dr. Keith Hamilton, First Vice-Chair

Lorri Van Diest, Second Vice-Chair

Sandra Kowalski

Tiffany Scott

Bob Griffin

Sally Stockhausen

Abigail Mainard, Student Advisor

Lieutenant Colonel Jeremiah Hammill, Military Advisor

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Alaska State Constitution education clause

Section 7.1 - Public Education.

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

AS 14.07.168. Report to the legislature

Not later than the 30th legislative day of each regular session of the legislature, the board shall prepare and present in person to the legislative committees having jurisdiction over education an annual report that describes the efforts of the board to develop, maintain, and continuously improve a comprehensive quality public education system, as provided for under the bylaws of the board. The report must include: (1) a summary of the resolves and rationales provided in support of policy decisions made under AS 14.03.015; (2) program and curriculum changes made, discussed, or recommended in meetings held under AS 14.07.125; (3) additional information relevant to efforts made to improve and maintain the public education system.

OUR MISSION

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

OUR VISION

**All students will succeed in their
education and work, shape
worthwhile and satisfying lives
for themselves, exemplify the best
values of society, and be effective
in improving the character and
quality of the world about them.**

Alaska Statute 14.03.015

Photo courtesy of Anchorage School District. Used with permission.

Purpose Statement

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



Alaska's Education Challenge

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

"Alaska's Education Challenge is a question to all Alaskans – 'How will we meet the educational challenges in our state?'" – Alaska Education Commissioner Dr. Michael Johnson

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

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

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

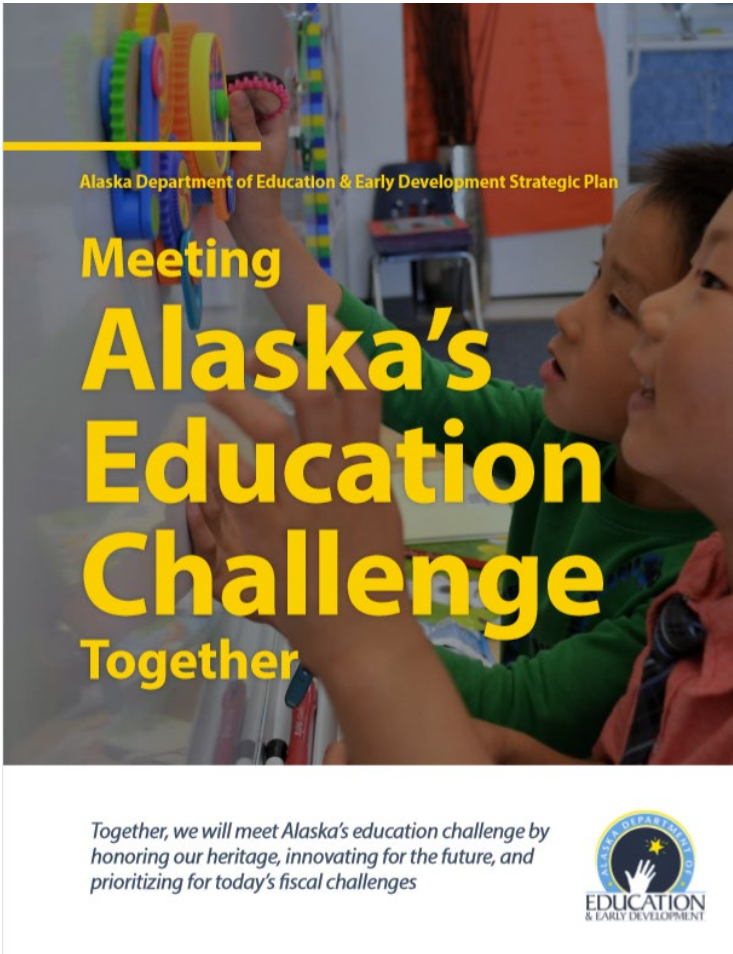


Under the board’s leadership, DEED has been collaborating with partner organizations to create and implement a strategic plan focused on five specific, measurable goals that are most likely to improve student outcomes from the dialogue and recommendations brought forward through the Alaska’s Education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

They are:

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


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



Alaska Department of Education & Early Development Strategic Plan

Meeting
**Alaska's
Education
Challenge**
Together

Together, we will meet Alaska's education challenge by honoring our heritage, innovating for the future, and prioritizing for today's fiscal challenges



EDUCATION
& EARLY DEVELOPMENT

REGULATIONS AND OTHER BOARD ACTIONS

In mid-January, the board and DEED were notified that the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) had revoked accreditation for the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) initial teacher preparation programs. The board announced that they would hold a meeting in early February to review the timeline leading to the CAEP decision and the ramifications of the loss of accreditation, as well as to explore the board’s next steps.

In February, the board approved UAA initial educator preparation programs for graduates in Spring 2019 and Summer 2019 only. The board’s decision allowed DEED to recognize UAA’s recommendations for initial licensure for these graduates.

The board’s approval motion recognized that UAA’s initial educator preparation programs were accredited and approved through December 31, 2018. Teacher candidates completing their preparation program at UAA during the 2019 Spring and Summer terms completed the majority of their education in an accredited and approved program. These graduates were considered to have graduated from a State-approved program. Additionally, the board approved a recommended process presented by DEED to address UAA’s path forward towards achieving accreditation by CAEP.

Lastly, the board granted continued State approval of the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) initial educator preparation programs through June 30, 2024.

In March, the board established four committees focused on standards and assessments, tribal compacting, regulations, and the funding formula. Each committee consists of three board members and meets with DEED staff in-between quarterly board meetings. These telephonic meetings provide opportunities for board members to interact and collaborate with staff on a regular basis, expand their knowledge of specific topics, and provide input on department efforts.

Standards & Assessments	Tribal Compacting	Regulations	Funding Formula
Sally Stockhausen, Committee Chair	Sandra Kowalski, Committee Chair	Lorri Van Diest, Committee Chair	Tiffany Scott, Committee Chair
Lorri Van Diest	Bob Griffin	Sandra Kowalski	Dr. Keith Hamilton
James Fields	Tiffany Scott	Bob Griffin	James Fields

After a period of public comment, the board adopted amendments to regulations regarding the sub-interval scores on the Performance Evaluation for Alaska’s Schools (PEAKS) assessment for grade 9 math. The adopted amendments update the grade 9 math sub-interval scores that are used to calculate student growth within Alaska’s new accountability system. The board previously adopted regulations amending the assessment achievement level scores on the

grade 9 math PEAKS assessment, as the test was revised during the 2017-18 school year to emphasize Algebra 1 concepts.

The board also adopted amendments to regulations regarding teacher certification. The adopted amendments add three basic competency exams to the list of approved exams in Alaska in an effort to continue decreasing barriers for educators prepared outside of Alaska to gain Alaska certification.

The board approved ten-year renewals of charters for Eagle Academy Charter School and STReaM Academy Charter School in the Anchorage School District, and Kaleidoscope Charter School in the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District. The board also approved the appointments of Aaron Leggett and Charles Diters to three-year terms on the Alaska State Museum Collections Advisory Committee.

Under the advisement of the Mt. Edgecumbe High School Advisory Board, the board directed DEED staff to work with the Governor's office and the Departments of Law and Natural Resources to further investigate the City and Borough of Sitka's request to purchase an approximately 3.0 acre parcel of land owned by the department and located at 1190 Seward Avenue in Sitka. The City and Borough of Sitka would like to construct a seaplane base on the property.

Lastly, the board issued a statement in a unanimous vote regarding Alaska's current fiscal challenges and its enduring commitment to meet Alaska's Education Challenge:

"The State Board of Education and Early Development (board) takes its responsibility to Alaska's students very seriously. Each of us volunteers to serve on the board because we believe in the promise of Alaska's youth. They are the future of our state.

This year, an intense focus has developed on the board's response to Governor Michael J. Dunleavy's proposed budget. The board acknowledges that the State of Alaska's financial challenges call for Alaskans, including its appointed and elected officials, to prioritize reevaluating its budget. We are pleased with the level of engagement the public has demonstrated in response to our sobering budget reality. With the public testimony that has been delivered, we are confident that public education will continue to be a priority for those with decision-making authority, as it is for the board.

Whether our budget increases or decreases or remains the same, it will not change our resolve to use the resources allocated to us to fulfill the three commitments we have made to our youth through Alaska's Education Challenge: 1) Improve student success; 2) Cultivate safety and well-being; and 3) Support responsible and reflective learners.

Finally, we cannot emphasize enough our steadfast support for Alaska's schools, educators, students, and their families. These times require the creative and innovative solutions that can only come through cooperation and partnership with state leadership.

It is with this same spirit that the board also extends its support to the Governor and the Legislature, as they work together to pass a sustainable budget that reflects the values of all Alaskans and positions our state for a prosperous future.”

In June, after a period of public comment, the board adopted amendments to regulations that updated the K-12 science standards, updated the technology standards as digital literacy standards, and added computer science standards as a new content area.

All three content standards were written and reviewed by Alaskan educators. Alaska’s science standards and technology standards were last revised in 2006. The adopted science standards were shaped around the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), and include applications of scientific principles and skills in an Alaskan context. Knowledge of computer science principles is an increasingly critical workforce-readiness skill. The new computer science standards do not require the establishment of a computer science program in schools, but create a unified foundation for school districts with existing programs and for those that choose to develop programs.

The board also adopted the latest school and school system accreditation documents published by AdvancED. DEED recognizes school accreditation status in regulation as determined by AdvancED Northwest.

The board approved ten-year renewals of charters for Watershed Charter School in the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District and Ayaprun Elitnaurvik Charter School in the Lower Kuskokwim School District.

Lastly, the board approved the appointments of Janet Woods to the Parent Representative Seat and Lois Rhodes as the Sitka Community Representative on the Mt. Edgecumbe High School Advisory Board.

In September, after a period of public comment, the board adopted amendments to regulations regarding school facility planning and construction and school facility commissioning. The adopted amendments accomplished needed clean-up work in several school facility planning and construction areas (e.g., citations for updated publications), codified current work practices, made improvements to the capital project administration process, and set limits on funding.

Additionally, the adopted amendments added a new subsection that establishes the requirement for commissioning based on the type, size, and complexity of the school capital project, and identified five key building systems that would most benefit from the commissioning process. These amendments were previously reviewed and approved by the Bond Reimbursement and Grant Review Committee. The last significant revision of these regulations occurred in 2010.

In December, the board approved changes to Mt. Edgecumbe High School's graduation requirements per the MEHS Advisory Board's recommendation. The changes included removing references to the High School Graduation Qualifying Exam, replacing the flexible credit choice with paths aligned with the Alaska Performance Scholarship course requirements under both tracks, and replacing the Pacific Rim studies class with a World History/Global Studies class.

New Officers, Members, and Staff

In February, two new board members and Tiffany Scott were sworn into office. Governor Michael J. Dunleavy appointed to the State Board Bob Griffin of Anchorage and Sally Stockhausen of Ketchikan, and reappointed Tiffany Scott of Kotzebue.

Mr. Griffin was appointed January 15 to fill the seat for the Public At-Large, replacing Barbara Thompson, who resigned. Mr. Griffin's term expires March 1, 2024. Mr. Griffin is an airline captain with Alaska Airlines and a retired U.S. Air Force fighter pilot. He is a current member of the Anchorage School District (ASD) Capital Improvement Advisory Committee and the former chair of the ASD Budget Advisory Commission. Mr. Griffin holds a bachelor's degree in professional aeronautics from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University.

Ms. Stockhausen was appointed January 15 to fill the seat for the First Judicial District, replacing Rebecca Himschoot. Ms. Stockhausen's term expires March 1, 2021. Ms. Stockhausen has served as a special education teacher in Alaska for over 15 years. She currently holds certification in Alaska as a teacher, and serves as a special education teacher and department chair with the Ketchikan Gateway Borough School District. Ms. Stockhausen holds a bachelor's degree in elementary education from John Brown University and a master's degree in special education from the University of Alaska Anchorage.

Ms. Scott was reappointed March 1 to fill the seat for the Second Judicial District. Ms. Scott's term expires March 1, 2024. Ms. Scott is employed by the Maniilaq Health Center as a registered nurse in the emergency department. She holds an associate of applied science degree in nursing from the University of Alaska Anchorage and a bachelor of liberal arts degree in extension studies from Harvard University Extension School. Ms. Scott is a former member of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School Board.

Lastly, the board approved the Commissioner's appointments of Karen Melin as Deputy Commissioner, Tamara Van Wyhe as Director of Innovation and Education Excellence, and Brittany Hartmann as Chief of Staff.

In April, the board welcomed Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) Jeremiah Hammill to the military advisor seat on the board. Lieutenant General Thomas Bussiere, Commander of the Alaskan Command, appointed LTC Hammill to the seat to replace the board's outgoing military advisor, Colonel Spencer Van Meter. The board also approved the Commissioner's appointments of Dr. Niki Tshibaka as Assistant Commissioner and Linda Mattson as Executive Secretary.

In June, the board re-elected James Fields as Chair, Dr. Keith Hamilton as First Vice-Chair, and Lorri Van Diest as Second Vice-Chair to serve from July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020.

In July, Abigail Mainard of Eagle River High School began her one-year term as student advisor. The board chooses the student advisor from several students nominated by the Alaska Association of Student Governments.

In September, the board approved the Commissioner's appointment of Erin Hardin as Special Assistant to the Commissioner.

In December, the board selected Myriam Scott of Eagle River High School as its student-advisor elect. She will begin her term as student advisor on July 1, 2020.

SIGNIFICANT STEPS

Assessments

Alaska successfully administered the statewide English language arts, math, and science assessments during the 2018-19 school year.

Performance Evaluation for Alaska's Schools (PEAKS) and the Alaska Science Assessment are statewide summative assessments designed to provide important data for parents, educators, policy makers, communities, and businesses about how Alaska's schools and districts are performing. This information informs school improvement efforts at the state and local levels, and helps ensure there is equity in education for all students. Assessments are one piece of the larger education system, and Alaska's statewide summative assessments are one part of a balanced assessment system.

PEAKS assesses students in grades 3-9 on the state's current English language arts and mathematics standards, adopted in 2012. PEAKS was first administered in spring 2017. The Alaska Science Assessment assesses students in grades 4, 8, and 10 on the state's science standards. The spring 2019 administration assessed students on the now-former science standards, adopted in 2006. Starting in 2022, students will be assessed on Alaska's revised science standards that were adopted in June 2019.

In spring 2019, approximately 76,400 students participated in the third administration of PEAKS and the Alaska Science Assessment.

PEAKS is not a pass/fail assessment. Students score on a scale that is divided into four levels of achievement: advanced, proficient, below proficient, and far below proficient.

Overall, 39.2 percent of students scored at a proficient level in English language arts, 35.7 percent of students scored at a proficient level in mathematics, and 44.6 percent of students scored at a proficient level in science.

Highlights:

- The 2017 grade 4 student class achieved growth over three years in English language arts proficiency
 - Grade 4: 38.8 percent proficient in 2017
 - Grade 5: 41.1 percent proficient in 2018
 - Grade 6: 45.5 percent proficient in 2019
- English learners achieved an increase in English language arts AND math proficiency
 - English language arts: 8.6 percent proficient in 2018 to 9.9 percent proficient in 2019
 - Math: 11.9 percent proficient in 2018 to 13.0 percent proficient in 2019

- Grade 9 students in 2019 achieved a 5.2 percent increase in math proficiency than grade 9 students the year prior. This was the second year the grade 9 math PEAKS assessment emphasized Algebra 1 concepts.
- The 2017 grade 8 student class achieved growth over two years in science proficiency
 - Grade 8: 46.9 percent in 2017
 - Grade 10: 53.6 percent in 2019

Neither PEAKS nor Alaska Science Assessment are high-stakes assessments for students. Results do not affect classroom grades, grade advancement, or graduation.

Resources to help the public understand PEAKS are available on the [PEAKS webpage](#).

2019 PEAKS and Alaska Science Assessment results are available on [DEED's Assessment Results webpage](#).

School Health and Safety Program

DEED's 2019 School Health and Safety Program focus was primarily to advance the Alaska Education Challenge's "Nurturing Safety and Well-Being" commitment through the initial implementation of the Challenge's three holistic safety and well-being priority strategies: increasing the implementation of trauma-engaged practices in schools, increasing positive school climate, and increasing direct access to school-based nursing and counseling services for all students.

Highlights of the Health and Safety Program's Education Challenge Implementation Efforts

- School Safety and Well-Being Summit
DEED hosted a dedicated statewide School Safety & Well-Being Summit in Anchorage at the Egan Center September 18-20, 2019. The summit brought together school safety leadership from 37 districts as well as key educational stakeholders from other agencies to acquire new best practices and to share effective existing school safety practices with an emphasis on restorative disciplinary practices, positive school climate, school crisis preparedness, and trauma informed schools. (The Summit's content was aligned to the Education Challenge's safety and well-being commitment and its supporting strategies.) In all, 300 educators from across the state participated and the feedback provided on the event was exceptionally positive.
- Trauma Engaged Schools Framework
DEED completed an interagency cooperative to develop *Transforming Schools: A Framework for Trauma-Engaged Practice in Alaska*. This innovative framework is a tool to use to deepen understanding of trauma, trauma's impact on development, behavior, and learning, social and emotional supports, trauma-informed school environments, and

key roles for adults in creating supportive educational environments for students. The tool aims to help schools and communities translate this understanding into action through policies and practices that support the whole child. This tool was created for all Alaskans—educators, parents, and community members who want to be involved in leading their schools to trauma-engaged change. It has now been broadly distributed to districts across the state and is receiving both local and national accolades.

A collection of districts across the state are communicating they are already beginning to implement the “Framework” such as Juneau, Bering Straits, Sitka, Ketchikan, and Hoonah. The framework is also getting national attention with several presentations to Safe and Supportive Schools TA center, National Child Traumatic Stress network, and the Neglected and Delinquent TA center out of the American Institutes for Research.

- Transforming Schools Toolkit:
DEED, in collaboration with AASB, is in the process of creating an Implementation Toolkit to complement the Transforming Schools Trauma Framework. It is being developed as a supplemental and highly practical resource to assist Alaska schools becoming fully trauma engaged and practicing. The toolkit is intended for districts to use with staff. It will contain training, professional learning, tools, activities and resources that illustrate, expand on, and can be used to implement the content for each of the framework’s chapters. The Toolkit will be completed in 2020.

- ACEs/Trauma Informed Schools eLearning Courses
DEED’s eLearning Program provides more than 50 trainings to districts at no cost and now serves more than 25,000 school district employees. Since January 1, 2019 users completed 26,057 courses. The most heavily trafficked courses DEED continued to be those focusing on school health and safety topics. DEED continued its development of distance-delivered trainings to assist districts with becoming trauma informed. In 2018 DEED premiered its first trauma specific courses *Overcoming ACEs in Alaska Schools* and *Trauma Sensitive Schools*. In 2019, DEED added a suite of custom-developed trauma-focused courses for district use. DEED’s trauma informed schools course offerings presently include:
 - *Overcoming ACEs in Alaska Schools:* This first course defines adverse childhood experiences and explains how they affect children’s brains, learning, and behavior.
 - *Trauma Sensitive Schools:* The second course provides insight into the paradigm shift schools undergo as they become better equipped to support students’ responses to traumatic experiences and the impact they may have on learning and behavior.
 - *Trauma Engaged and Practicing Schools:* The Trauma-engaged course will provide tools for teachers to use in their classrooms to include restorative practices, mindfulness activities, co- and self-regulation, social emotional learning, multi-tiered system of supports and describe the process of being a

“trauma-informed school” and the steps for moving from “trauma-aware” to “trauma-informed practice”.

- *Classroom Practice*: Trauma can have a profound effect on how students perform in school. Teachers who take a trauma-engaged approach are sensitive to the fact that some students have experienced significant trauma and can provide the supportive environment they need for success. This course walks you through strategies you can use in your classroom.
- *Self-regulation*: is the ability to manage emotions and behavior. Students who have experienced trauma may have trouble developing self-regulation skills. This course provides a foundation for understanding self-regulation and walks you through how to help students develop these skills.
- *Mind-Body Connection*: To ensure the academic success of students who have experienced trauma, it is necessary for schools to address their health emotional well-being. This course provides a good foundational understanding of how non-academic mindfulness tools and techniques can help students focus in the classroom. You may also find these activities helpful and healing for yourself.
- *Emotional Intelligence*: Students who have experienced trauma can react to stress in unpredictable ways because trauma can impede their ability to develop emotional intelligence. This course gives foundational information about emotional intelligence and walks you through strategies you can use with students.
- *Upcoming courses for FY2020*:
 - *A Guide to Family Partnerships*
 - *A Guide to Childhood Traumatic Grief*
 - *Collaborate with Early Learning to develop courses for PK and Head start staff*
 - *Trauma Engaged Counselors Tools & Techniques*
 - *Self Care for Educators*
- New Trauma Recovery Demonstration Grant

DEED has been awarded a \$5 million five-year federal grant by the U.S. Department of Education to expand delivering mental health services to students who have experienced trauma and are struggling in school as a result. The funding will enable DEED to oversee and facilitate a robust partnership between the Alaska Child Trauma Center and the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District to increase low-income, at-risk students’ access to mental health services. Additionally, DEED will be able to develop a trauma-specific mental health services model that can be replicated across the state.
- Alaska Safe Children’s Act

DEED continued progress on the state authored student training to support districts with the implementation of the Alaska Safe Children’s Act in grades 7-12. Each grade band will include 5 modules for dating violence awareness and prevention and sexual

assault/abuse awareness and prevention that will be delivered via eLearning. The state authored curriculum will be available to districts for the 2020-2021 school year. In addition to the curriculum, the committee finalized *Implementing the Alaska Safe Children's Act – A Resource for Alaska Schools*. This implementation guide offers information, recommendations and resources to assist school districts, schools, and teachers in Alaska in implementing the Alaska Safe Children's Act. The document includes the following six sections: Background Information; How to Respond to Disclosures of Abuse; Classroom Implementation; Mandatory Training and eLearning Professional Development for Staff; Prevention in Schools; and School Practices and Policies.

- **2019 School Health and Wellness Institute**
DEED partnered with the Department of Health and Social Services to co-sponsor the 14th annual School Health and Wellness Institute (SHWI) on October 28-30, 2019 in Anchorage. The SHWI is Alaska's single largest gathering of educators and other professionals focused solely on school health. It brought together more than 150 school personnel including teachers, counselors, school nurses, school administrators and others to provide 3 days of professional development and address new and emerging school health topics. This year's SHWI was fashioned in alignment to the nationally endorsed Centers for Disease Control Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC) Model. It included sessions on trauma-engaged school practices, resilience and mindfulness, youth substance use, suicide prevention and more.

Increased Focus on Third Grade Reading Proficiency

On October 1, 2019, Commissioner Johnson announced that DEED had received a \$20.7 million five-year federal grant from the U.S. Department of Education to expand the state's efforts to improve literacy skills for all students. DEED will use the grant funds to develop and implement a comprehensive state literacy program that will include reading coaches, professional development for educators, support for parents and caregivers, and competitive sub grants for school districts to advance literacy skills.

The federal grant provides funding to DEED over five school years, starting with \$4.9M in the current school year (2019-2020). For the following four school years, \$3.9M will be distributed to DEED each year.

"We intentionally applied for this grant to support the implementation of the first goal in the Alaska's Education Challenge – supporting all students to read at grade level by the end of third grade," said Commissioner Johnson. "There is no question that reading proficiently improves student outcomes and quality of life. I look forward to working with parents and educators to utilize this federal grant on behalf of Alaska's students."

Quoting from an ExcelinEd factsheet, Commissioner Johnson pointed out that, “Students who cannot read by the end of the third grade are four times more likely to drop out of high school, and high school dropouts make up 75 percent of citizens receiving food stamps and 90 percent of the Americans on welfare. Nearly 85 percent of teenagers in the juvenile justice system cannot read to learn and seven out of ten adult prisoners cannot read above a fourth grade level.” The Commissioner also noted that a focus on reading outcomes is emphasized in the Alaska Legislative Task Force on Reading Proficiency and Dyslexia final report, “The students that do not read proficiently by third grade fall further and further behind. As their peers use reading skills to acquire new skills, these students remain on square one.”

Implementing the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

In December 2015, the president signed into law the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which is authorized for four years. ESSA replaces the No Child Left Behind Act of 2002 (NCLB) and the Obama administration’s waiver program under NCLB.

ESSA maintained some provisions of NCLB, but intentionally provided more flexibility and authority to the states. No longer is a school required to be designated for improvement simply by missing one academic achievement target for one subgroup of students in a single year. ESSA requires states to develop plans that address standards, assessments, school and district accountability, and support for struggling schools, giving states more flexibility in the process of how to hold schools accountable and how to provide support to schools in the greatest need of support.

On March 13, 2019, the U.S. Department of Education approved an amendment to Alaska’s ESSA plan. Alaska’s plan to implement ESSA was previously approved by the U.S. Department of Education on May 16, 2018. As part of that approval, Alaska was required to submit an amendment to the state plan by January 15, 2019, and provide data to ensure that low-income and minority children enrolled in schools assisted with Title I, Part A funds are not served at a disproportionate rate by inexperienced, out-of-field, and ineffective teachers.

DEED considered input provided by stakeholders during the compilation and analysis of the data through multiple webinars with district personnel and an online feedback form for the public.

Alaska’s amendment and approval letter from the U.S. Department of Education are available on DEED’s [ESSA webpage](#).

On September 30, 2019, DEED released school designations as part of Alaska’s accountability system for all public schools, known as the [System for School Success](#). The designations are based on multiple measures of student success, including graduation rates, academic growth and achievement, grade 3 English language arts proficiency, and other measures of school

quality and student success in school year 2018-2019. This is the second year for the Alaska-developed accountability and support system as part of the state's ESSA plan. More detailed information about school designations is available on the System for School Success [webpage](#).

New School Data Portal Available for Alaska's Families

On September 30, 2019, DEED released a new online data portal for Alaska's families entitled [The Compass: A Guide to Alaska's Public Schools](#). The purpose of the online portal is to provide Alaska's families with important information about their child's school so they can make the best decisions for their child's educational experience.



“The Compass can be a vehicle for transformation, not just information,” noted Commissioner Johnson. *“The data displayed should drive school improvement discussions on behalf of our students.”*

The Compass presents school-level data reported to DEED in an easily accessible and understandable online format. Visitors can view a profile of their school, compare their school's data over multiple years, compare two schools, and explore educational options in their local school district and across the state.

DEED plans to expand the information available in *The Compass* to include school-level financial data and per-pupil expenditures per the new federal education requirements in ESSA. Additional data made available in the future may include extracurricular activities and course availability, among other options. DEED is seeking public feedback on what additional data Alaskans would like to see in the future.

OTHER DEPARTMENT FUNCTIONS

Mt. Edgecumbe High School (MEHS)

[Mt. Edgecumbe](#) is the state-operated residential school in Sitka. The board serves as the MEHS board. Parents and others participate on an advisory board. In fall 2019, over 430 students were accepted at MEHS. Over 160 new students were accepted, and over 270 returning students were welcomed back to Sitka. This year's student body represents over 120 different communities across Alaska. 70 percent of accepted students were from home high schools of 100 students or less. 13 percent of accepted students were from home high schools of 500 students or more.

Alaska State Council on the Arts

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

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

The [Division of Libraries, Archives, and Museums](#) offers library and information services to state agencies and the Legislature, provides for the orderly management of current state records, preserves non-current public records of permanent value for study and research, and operates the state museums.

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

- [Hands-on Loan Program](#): As part of LAM's outreach to students in rural areas across the state, the Sheldon Jackson Museum maintains a collection loan program for schools, libraries, and museums in Alaska.
- [Live Homework Help](#) provides live tutoring for students in grades four to early college, seven days a week, from noon to 2 a.m. Use has grown exponentially in the past several years.
- [Alaska's Digital Archives](#) shares historical Alaskan videos, photographs, and documents with students and researchers.
- [Alaska's Statewide Library Electronic Doorway \(SLED\) Databases](#) and [Digital Library](#) contain hundreds of full-text online books, magazines, newspapers, and other research resources targeted to elementary, middle school, high school, and college students' academic needs.
- Through [OWL \(Online with Libraries\)](#), nearly 100 rural libraries have high-speed internet access.

Professional Teaching Practices Commission (PTPC)

The [Alaska Professional Teaching Practices Commission](#) governs educators' ethical and professional standards and their compliance with state law and contractual obligations. Certificate holders fund the Commission. The Commission reports by fiscal year. In FY2019, it accepted 53 cases and sanctioned 13 educators. Sanctions may vary from warnings to suspensions and revocations of certificates. View the FY2019 Annual Report at [2019 PTPC Annual Report](#).

SCHOOL AND STUDENT DATA

Graduation and Dropout Rates

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

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

Year	4-yr. graduation rate	Graduate count*
2011	68.0%	8,064
2012	69.4%	7,987
2013	71.8%	7,795
2014	71.2%	7,672
2015	75.6%	8,251
2016	76.1%	8,108
2017	78.2%	8,385
2018	78.5%	8,454
2019	79.8%	8,419

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

In 2019, the preliminary five-year graduation rate was 83.8%. This refers to a cohort of students who were 9th-graders five school years previously. Many of the students graduated in four years, but others needed all or part of a fifth year.

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

Preliminary information for the 2018-2019 school year shows a grade 7-12 dropout rate of 3.0% compared to 3.1% in 2017-2018. The dropout rate has gradually declined from 6.0% in 2004-2005 to its current level.

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

Every two years the U.S. Department of Education, through the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), tests large samples of 4th-graders and 8th-graders in each state (plus the District of Columbia and Department of Defense schools) in reading and mathematics. The most recent NAEP results were released in 2019.

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

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

- In the highest-scoring state, 49% of its students scored proficient or advanced in 4th-grade reading;
- In the highest-scoring state, 52% of its students scored proficient or advanced in 8th-grade reading;
- In the highest-scoring state, 54% of its students scored proficient or advanced in 4th-grade math; and
- In the highest-scoring state, 47% of its students scored proficient or advanced in 8th-grade math.

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

- In 4th grade math, Alaska scored lower than 46 states, statistically the same as 4 states, and higher than 1 state.
- In 8th grade math, Alaska scored lower than 37 states, statistically the same as 11 states, and higher than 3 states.
- In 4th grade reading, Alaska scored lower than 50 states and statistically the same as 1 state.
- In 8th grade reading, Alaska scored lower than 47 states and statistically the same as 4 states.

The following data, comparing Alaska results to the national average, are from results released in 2019. Alaska's performance on the NAEP is poor. It is similar to the national average because that also is poor. Some states perform notably better than Alaska and the national average. The department has cited Alaska's performance on NAEP as one indication of the need to implement higher standards in English language arts and math.

Math

Alaska 4th grade: 73% basic or above; 33% proficient or above; 5% advanced.
Nation 4th grade: 80% basic or above; 40% proficient or above; 9% advanced.
Alaska's average scale score is 232. The national average is 240.

Alaska 8th grade: 63% basic or above; 29% proficient or above; 7% advanced.
Nation 8th grade: 68% basic or above; 33% proficient or above; 10% advanced.
Alaska's average scale score is 274. The national average is 281.

Reading

Alaska 4th grade: 53% basic or above; 25% proficient or above; 5% advanced.
Nation 4th grade: 66% basic or above; 35% proficient or above; 9% advanced.
Alaska's average scale score is 204. The national average is 219.

Alaska 8th grade: 63% basic or above; 23% proficient or above; 2% advanced.
Nation 8th grade: 72% basic or above; 32% proficient or above; 4% advanced.
Alaska's average scale score is 252. The national average is 262.

For more information, see:

<https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/>

[Alaska 2019 NAEP Results - 4th Grade Reading](#)

[Alaska 2019 NAEP Results - 4th Grade Mathematics](#)

[Alaska 2019 NAEP Results - 8th Grade Reading](#)

[Alaska 2019 NAEP Results - 8th Grade Mathematics](#)

APPENDIX A

Mt. Edgecumbe High School

State Board of Education Report

December 2019

Prepared by: Janelle Vanasse, Superintendent/Director

Note from the Superintendent

We are beginning our strategic plan revision process. We are working to align the MEHS strategic plan to the Alaska Education Challenge. As part of our previous plan, MEHS has worked to identify consistent data and goals to monitor each year. Many of these already align with the Alaska Educator Challenge and with the process of revision will fit nicely into the statewide plan. Current goals include those set around: Academic Growth, Academic Achievement, College & Career Readiness, and Healthy Living & Leadership Skills. Two of these are highlighted for this report with current data reports.

Current Enrollment/Admissions Information

October Count

Grade	F	M	ALL
9	69	51	120
10	74	39	113
11	57	42	99
12	58	39	97
total	258	171	429

Student numbers by region

Region		
Anchorage & Valley	62	14.52%
Far North	90	21.08%
Interior	17	3.98%
Southcentral	22	5.15%
Southeast	49	11.48%
Southwest	187	43.79%

2 students undetermined



Expanded Leadership

Providing leadership opportunities has long been a goal for MEHS. We have a strong student government and National Honor Society. As part of our school improvement process we have been looking for additional leadership opportunities for students. This was our third year in sending a group of students to the First Alaskans Youth and Elder Conference and our second year partnering with the National Guard for their Explorers program.

Data Highlight

Academic Growth

MEHS students will demonstrate an accelerated or appropriate academic growth

MEHS met or exceeded our growth targets measured by NWEA MAP. The school growth placed MEHS above the 90thile for school wide growth on a national comparison.

Academic Achievement

MEHS students will demonstrate proficiency at the appropriate grade or post-secondary level

State Assessment

33% of our 9th grade students will be proficient on state exams and 50% of our 10th graders in science PEAK assessment data available online: [MEHS PEAKS assessment data](#)

Year	9 ELA	9 Math	10 Science
2018-19	21.9%	30.0%	50.6%
2017-18	27.5%	20.7%	45.7%
2016-17	25.2%	15.7%	59.6%

ACT Readiness Benchmarks

Percentage refers to the percentage who met benchmarks of those who took the test

Year	# total	# took ACT	English 18	Math 22	SS Read 22	Science 23
2018-19	82	55	40%	25%	16%	11%
2017-18	100	62	52%	27%	37%	16%
2016-17	100	67	49%	22%	31%	18%

Initiative/Strategy Highlight

Junior Advisory

This year MEHS implemented a Junior Advisory course. This is a one-day a week course that occurs before the normal school day for most juniors. In school improvement planning around our goal to have students college and career ready, we observed a gap in our advising. Junior year is a critical time for exploring options and making choices that impact options for post-secondary.

Topics include:

Career Exploration

Post-secondary options

College and program comparisons

Scholarship Knowledge

Scholarship Preparation

Budgeting Information

Career and/or college preparation prerequisites

Matching personal values/goals with post secondary options for the “right fit”

Creating a balanced student profile

In addition to the above broader topics, it is the time and place for the school to provide:

ACT/SAT testing dates and procedures

Course Selection information for Senior Year

Opportunities for summer and special programs

Post-secondary planning timelines and expectations

Junior Class announcements

Special Speakers

College and Career Guide

This is the third year that MEHS is partnering with the Alaska Fellows program to sustain a college and career guide at MEHS. The position is modeled after the National College and Career Advising Corps and receives training from the Alaska Commission on Post Secondary Training. Students, particularly first generation and low income, get one on one assistance in post-secondary planning and preparation. Joelle Jura is our guide this year and she is doing an excellent job. We already have more juniors that have either taken or signed up for an ACT test than last year. Getting our students prepared to take this test and gaining the advantage of taking it more than once is one of our indicator strategies for increasing college readiness.