



MEMORANDUM

To: State Board of Education & Early Development
Date: February 3, 2022

Thru: Commissioner Michael Johnson
Telephone: (907) 269-4583

From: Susan McKenzie, Director
Division of Innovation and
Education Excellence
Subject: Agenda 14A. Division of
Innovation and Education
Excellence Standing Report

The Division of Innovation and Education Excellence (IEE) is dedicated to providing an excellent education for every student every day by focusing division efforts around the five priorities of the Alaska's Education Challenge; providing oversight of state and federally funded programs to ensure quality and equity of student services; and providing excellent technical assistance and support to districts statewide.

The IEE Division encompasses nine teams that manage a wide range of programs and activities for the State. These teams include the Assessment Team, the Career and Technical Education Team, the Early Learning Team, the ESEA Federal Programs Team, the Health and Safety Team, the School Recognition and Support Team, the Special Education Team, and the Teacher Certification Team. In addition, staff from each of these teams have been very involved in supporting the COVID Fiscal Team's work.

Included in the IEE Board Report are highlights of work with initiatives, compliance work, and support to districts as it relates to the Alaska's Education Challenge priorities.

Alaska's Education Challenge Priority #1:
Support all students to read at grade level by the end of third grade.

Director Updates

- A DEED team, along with the Region 16 Comprehensive Center (R16CC), has been preparing for the upcoming Science of Reading Symposium, scheduled for April 29-May 1, 2022 at the Egan Convention Center in Anchorage. All education stakeholders are invited to the event. Symposium goals include:

- Ground Alaska education stakeholders in a cohesive understanding of the science of reading.
- Engage in courageous conversations about Alaska’s reading performance and how to move the needle on student outcomes.
- DEED is preparing to hire three full time long term non-permanent positions that will make up the Reading Support Team, including a Reading Support Team Administrator, Educational Specialist II with a reading endorsement, and an Educational Associate II as support staff. The team will provide resources, support and leadership to schools and districts in the state. Some of the larger projects they will be involved in are: development and implementation of a strategic reading plan, development of an updated Alaska Literacy Blueprint, supporting designated schools in the area of reading, and providing statewide professional development.
- In partnership with the R16CC, DEED is offering a series of webinars to educators using the Alaska Reading Playbook as the resource. The Alaska Reading Playbook is a reading resource using evidence-based practices based on the science of reading. Webinars begin in February and conclude in April.

Assessment

- DEED has been preparing for the AK STAR administration in spring 2022. The testing window is planned for March 28 – April 29, 2022. In partnership with NWEA, the assessments team launched the online management system in January.
 - The fall and winter interim assessments will give educators increased access to formative data that will allow for meaningfully adjusting for standards-aligned instruction, acquiring resources, and deploying supports for students—all in effort of teaching and learning.
- Key activities this winter include:
- Assessment development activities with NWEA and subcontractor ETS, to include system and technology elements, data elements, technical manuals, and district and student readiness tools.
 - Development of an AK STAR toolkit, including infographics, a social media kit, a video series, presentation templates and talking points for educators, student-facing resources, and professional learning highlights.
 - Continued communications and outreach related to the transition to AK STAR, including presentations on the overall vision and program activities for the AK STAR System with key stakeholder groups throughout the state.
 - Delivery of several professional learning workshops and seminars on topics of balanced assessment, data use, and understanding assessment reports through collaboration with NWEA, Region 16 Comprehensive Center, SERRC, and DEED.
- Monitoring District Assessment Activities
 - The assessment team reviewed processes for monitoring districts’ assessment activities as established to ensure standardized assessment administration, test security, and reporting protocols in alignment with federal and state policies and has planned for outreach to identified districts and schools in 2022.
 - Through the shift in emphasis around the assessment monitoring processes and data, DEED seeks to promote productive communication between DEED and districts, including the validation and sharing of productive practices and resources.

Key activities this winter include:

- Scheduling introductory calls and providing resources to guide and support districts in the monitoring process for spring 2022.
- Providing technical support to districts, as needed, through the monitoring process.

Early Learning

- DEED is currently investigating options for a statewide K-3 screener/assessment for reading that is capable of providing detailed assistance to teachers and identify potential dyslexia in students to ensure remediation and accommodations are not delayed.

ESEA Federal Programs

- The Title II-A Program has established a partnership with NWEA to offer science of reading courses.
 - The Supporting Effective Literacy Instruction project will provide up to 100 educators with a 10-week elementary science of reading course from CORE.
 - This course will involve online learning with collaborative opportunities and credit.
- In addition, the Title II-A program is in the process of establishing a partnership with Education Northwest to offer a science of reading course for administrators this summer.
 - Up to 50 administrators will take an 8-week course in the science of reading using the Alaska Reading Playbook, supplemented by CORE reading materials.
 - This course will be online with community of practices extending throughout the next school year and allowing the earning of credit.
- The Title II-A Program has continued its partnership with the UAA Professional and Continuing Education (PACE) and the R16CC to implement the Designing Professional Learning in a Virtual World program.
 - On February 1st, the second professional development roundtable will be held for this year and will have a focus on reading.
 - The team continues to update the training calendar on aklearns.org to promote statewide professional learning opportunities and is also seeking input on interest in a statewide in-service day during the next school year.

School Recognition and Support

- DEED continues to support 16 projects around the state participating in the Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) grant, serving students from birth to grade 12, and focusing on early literacy skill instruction, early interventions, reading on grade level by end of grade 3, and increasing reading proficiency rates. Support includes:
 - Maintaining a website for grantee information and project spotlights: <https://clsd.aklearns.org/>.
 - Hosting a Fall and Spring Convening for grantees for collaboration and technical assistance.
 - Monthly calls and ongoing technical assistance to CLSD grantees to ensure grant activities are implemented.
Creating, hosting, coordinating, and tracking 75 hours of professional development opportunities for CLSD grant participants.

Special Education

- The Dyslexia eLearning Module was initiated in December 2021 and since has had 49 participants from 19 school districts view the material. Feedback has been limited but positive. The existence of the module will be covered in the March Special Education Director's Training, as well as discussed at the Alaska State Special Education Conference (ASSEC) in February 2022.

Alaska's Education Challenge Priority #2:

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

Career and Technical Education (CTE)

- The annual Spring DEED Perkins Workshop will be held February 9-11, 2022, in Anchorage. CTE district directors will gather to collaborate on Perkins funded CTE programs and connect with post-secondary stakeholders across the state.
 - The developing statewide CTE Clearinghouse will be presented to workshop participants with beta testing of the resource sharing and collaboration platform in late Spring. The Alaska Association for Career and Technical Education (AK ACTE) has been an excellent partner in this project by taking the lead in developing this platform.
 - Career/Skills Camps for students will be presented to district stakeholders to encourage collaboration between school districts, industry partners, and training institutions to deliver up to 30 camps serving Alaska students over the next 2 years.
 - Representatives of University of Alaska campuses are hosted at the conference to develop partnerships that shore up dual credit arrangements that allow students to obtain post-secondary credit for CTE work completed while still in High School. DEED partnership with the University of Alaska Transition Coalition has been productive in streamlining and providing some consistency for dual credit cooperation with the University of Alaska system.
 - Support will be provided to district attendees receiving federal Perkins funds to complete the every-two-year update of existing Comprehensive Local Needs Assessments (CLNA) as required for federal funding as part of applications for 2023 funds.
- DEED continues to pursue the development of statewide CTE Programs of Study (CTEPS) to better share resources, expertise, and curriculum across the state. Programs have been developed in early childhood education, welding, and IT (web engineering). A health CTEPS is being developed in partnership with Alaska Area Health Education Centers (AHEC).

Early Learning

- The Head Start Collaboration Office and CTE have developed a statewide Career Technical Education Program of Study (CTEPS) in Early Childhood Education, where high school students can earn dual credit towards an early childhood degree.
- Work continues with UAF to develop a program of study, including a 1 dual-credit course entitled "Exploring Early Care and Education (ECE) for Personal Growth and Career Opportunities" to introduce high school students to Early Childhood Education as a career option.

ESEA Federal Programs

- The 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) funded LEAD afterschool program at Burchell High School in the Mat-Su Borough School District was recently featured in a national article highlighting their work, particularly in the area of “credit for learning” opportunities:
 - “The program aims to help students, many of whom come from difficult backgrounds, prepare for college or a career by providing opportunities to explore different career paths and build skills through experiential and project-based learning electives, all while earning school credit.”
 - The rest of the article is available [online](#).
- The Title II-A Program has continued its partnership with the Alaska Staff Development Network (ASDN) to expand and grow the Computer Science for Alaska program.
 - DEED has continued to fund a second facilitator to allow Code.org training to be offered virtually statewide.
 - Educators are participating in professional development and then offering computer science to students at all grade levels. Additionally, follow-up sessions throughout the year are offered to help sustain the learning.
- The McKinney-Vento Homeless Education program has developed and offered an e-learning course on Understanding Homelessness. This course helps educators learn how to identify children and youth who meet the definition of homeless, the services available to help students and families, and understand the educational rights of students experiencing homelessness.

Special Education

- DEED’s special education State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) activities support students with disabilities when students are leaving school. This is accomplished through providing opportunities and an individualized plan to obtain success in meaningful work and life skills. Activities include:
 - Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) work agreements for all qualifying students with disabilities exiting school districts. A work agreement provides students a plan for working towards becoming self-sufficient. Students that qualify receive work support, personal assistance and in some cases compensation from DVR.
 - Cooperative work with DVR through the established Alaska Intra-agency Transition Council (AITC). This assures there is no wrong door for services to students or districts seeking assistance in servicing students who are joining the work force.
 - Joint trainings (virtual) for secondary transition camps in cooperation with the Southeast Regional Resource Center (SERRC). These camps provide training and direct assistance for students and staff serving students in the area of vocational needs.

Federal APR Indicator	FFY 2020 AK Target	FFY 2020 AK Data	Comparison to FFY 2019 AK Data
1 – Graduation Rates	70.7% (new)	70.7%	Progress from 66.6%
2 – Dropout Rates	23.5% (new)	23.5%	Progress from 25.6%

Alaska's Education Challenge Priority #3:

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

Director Update

- DEED is in the process of procuring an Interactive Predictive Data Dashboard and Statewide Student Information System. A Request for Information (RFI) will go out this week to gather information that will inform a formal Request for Procurement (RFP).
 - An Interactive Predictive Data Dashboard allows DEED, districts, and educators the ability to identify potential areas of risk and provide data that can inform state and district policy.
 - A Statewide Student Information System allows DEED to collect data (student information system) on a more frequent basis by interacting with district data systems. Currently, data is collected twice per year in the Fall and Summer OASIS data collections.

COVID Fiscal Team

- DEED's application for Emergency Assistance to Non-public Schools (EANS II) funding from the U.S. Department of Education was approved on December 20, 2021. This is the second round of funding from the US Department of Education to support private schools with COVID-related expenses.
 - This funding allows private schools to address learning loss and help students achieve reading goals.
 - DEED will accept applications from January 19, 2022, through February 18, 2022 and will work with private schools to procure allowable goods and services through July 2022.

Data and Accountability

- Accountability System - The accountability system and school designations are slated to return using data from the 2021-2022 school year. US ED issued an accountability addendum template in December 2021. Because we are introducing AK STAR in the spring, we are considering replacing the growth indicator for the 2022-2023 accountability system. The team is currently modeling other indicators as possible replacements using legacy data. While the modeling cannot tell us what will happen, it does give us a general idea of the appropriateness of an indicator to meaningfully differentiate schools in an equitable manner.
- Community Engagement – The team will present the accountability addendum request and revised digital equity collection to stakeholders in meetings with the Community of Practitioners, the Assessment Advisement group, and Accountability Advisement group in late Winter.
- Report Card to the Public – The report card has been published on the DEED website. The state Report Card can be found here (<https://education.alaska.gov/compass/Report/2020-2021/>). School and District Report Cards can be found here (<https://education.alaska.gov/compass/report-card>). Note that two assurances of the waiver for accountability based on data from the 2020-2021 school year were that DEED would publish Chronic Absenteeism and Access to Technology in our Report Card. Two new tabs have been

created on the left-hand navigation menu to present these data called *Chronic Absenteeism* and *Access to Technology Data*.

- School Mode of Instruction – In order to satisfy obligations of the ARP ESSER grants, we continue to collect data on the extent to which schools were operating in person or remotely. Data collected in the 2020-2021 school year will not be available because, in order to alleviate district burden during the first year of the collection, the majority of the districts data were collected through another ARP ESSER related data collection. However, it was later discovered that there were key differences that did not yield usable data when schools were in operation fully remotely.

ESEA Federal Programs

- The 7th Annual Alaska Afterschool Conference (co-hosted by DEED, the Alaska Afterschool Network, and DHSS) occurred virtually November 18-19, 2021 and engaged approximately 175 afterschool educators. Among the 14 live sessions (and many more pre-recorded sessions) was a presentation by the Region 16 Comprehensive Center and Education Northwest introducing the Alaska Reading Playbook to afterschool providers.
- The Title II-A Program in collaboration with Teacher Education and Certification has updated Alaska’s Equity Plan to “Increase equitable access to experienced and effective educators.” The website outlines the logic model for meeting this challenge and the statewide committee will work with DEED to create tools for the districts to implement a plan locally.
- The Title II-A Program continues to partner with the Alaska Rural Innovation & Student Engagement Network (AKRISE) hosted by the Denali Borough School District. This program offers monthly educator meet-ups where educators collaborate on the unique challenges of working in rural Alaska.
 - On February 25th and 26th, AKRISE will hold a virtual convening planned by and for rural educators.
 - The convening’s goal is to form collaborative teams to engage in a problem of practice beyond the convening time.
- The ESEA Federal Programs team has started ESEA Federal Programs Compliance Monitoring for FY2022. This includes the fiscal and programmatic review of 12 school districts.
 - The ESEA Federal Programs team’s vision for monitoring is to help build school district awareness of the requirements associated with accepting federal funds, capacity to self-assess against the requirements of the grants, and understanding of how they can best utilize grant funding to improve services for students.
 - Monitoring is an opportunity to identify districts’ technical assistance and support needs and leverage federal funds in support of better outcomes for all students.
 - With this in mind, the monitoring system is designed to accomplish the following objectives:
 - focus on what matters
 - improve communication with districts
 - differentiate and customize support for districts
 - ensure basic ESEA requirements are met

School Recognition and Support

- DEED is working to update and refresh our state-provided resources for Alaska’s content area standards, with a current focus on math, ELA, and science. These resources will support

Alaska's educators in understanding and implementing the adopted state standards in their schools and classroom instruction.

- Updating DEED's website for clarity and ease of use.
- Creating asynchronous course modules taking educators through the unpacking and implementation process for Alaska's recently adopted science standards.
- Providing technical assistance to districts and schools as requested on standards unpacking and curriculum alignment.
- The Project for Successful School Improvement has had some forward traction:
 - Two schools in Cohort 1 (the five rural schools piloting the new process) have been visited by DEED and R16CC partners to build relationships and establish context for school improvement measures. Three school visit plans have been disrupted due to covid mitigation measures and inclement weather.
 - Four Empowerment Specialists have been hired through SERRC and R16CC and are being trained in the updated School Improvement process before being assigned to their school in Cohort 1.
 - Schools in Cohort 1 will go through the new process with their Empowerment Specialists for the remainder of the 2021-2022 school year and throughout the 2022-2023 school year, refining the process as they go through regular communication and support by DEED.
- The School Improvement team is updating and streamlining the planning and grant application process for all other designated schools and districts for the 2022-2023 school year.
 - All designated schools not in Cohort 1 will complete a condensed school improvement plan and grant application for the 2022-2023 school year. Detailed information and technical assistance on this process will be provided by DEED through regularly scheduled webinars throughout the spring and set office hours for the School Improvement team to be reached.
 - Designations for 2022-2023 will be established in Fall/Winter of 2022 using the AK STAR assessment data.
 - Newly designated schools will receive a planning grant
 - Previously designated schools will receive the amount that had been allocated in 2021-2022
 - Schools that have exited designation according to their index score will continue with their school improvement plan and the previously allotted amount of grant funding from 1003(a)

Special Education

- Communication with school districts has been maintained this year via the continuation of a live weekly webinar with Special Education Directors. These weekly sessions are intended to provide frequent and real time Q & A opportunities to district staff. Through this communication link, the department provides leadership and support while building relationships with the school districts.
- The Special Education Team is submitting the Indicator 17 Data of the State Systemic Improvement Plan (S-SIP) for the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) in February 2022.
 - The submission includes reporting on training and supports, coordinated with the Alaska Interagency Transition Council (AITC).

- These activities are conducted in cooperation with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and the Southeast Regional Resource Center (SERRC).
- Secondary Transition of special education populations is critical to closing the gap between students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers.

Teacher Certification

- Seal of Biliteracy: A Seal of Biliteracy would recognize students who have studied and attained proficiency in English and at least one other world language by high school graduation. With input from stakeholders, DEED staff and the Department of Law have drafted regulations providing guidance to districts interested in offering a Seal of Biliteracy to their students. The draft regulations will be presented to the board at the March meeting.

**Alaska’s Education Challenge Priority #4:
Prepare, attract, and retain effective education professionals.**

Assessment

- The assessment team is increasing avenues and opportunities for stakeholder engagement in various aspects of the state assessment program. By enhancing stakeholder knowledge and understanding of the different assessment types along with their purpose and uses, DEED will increase awareness of the value of a balanced assessment system.
 - Some of the engagement efforts include:
 - Inviting educators to be involved in key test development and review activities
 - Resurrecting the Assessment Advisory Panel (AAP) to strategically involve a small group of educators, community members, and students from around the state in assessment discussions and actions
 - Promoting educator representation on the technical advisory committee (TAC)
 - Seeking opportunities to engage in cross-team stakeholder engagements to build connections between assessment, standards, instruction, and other statewide initiatives.

Key activities this winter include:

- Notification to applicants of their selection for the Assessment Advisory Panel, development of the planned meeting dates and topics for 2022, and coordination with DEED staff who will present to the AAP.
- Selection and onboarding of an additional district-level representative for the TAC.
- Outreach to educators soliciting interest in upcoming assessment design activities (standard setting, alignment study, review and piloting science assessment tools).

Health & Safety

- Alaska Healthy Schools Learning Collaborative: DEED in collaboration with the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) is providing a Professional Development Series to Alaskan educators on various health topics. Throughout the school year virtual sessions (recorded) will be held covering such topics as: Mental Health, Staff Wellness, School Health, Trauma-Engaged Practice, School Climate/Relationship skill building and more. To date more than 300 educators have participated.

- **eLearning:** The following chart shows the number of participants that completed the highest trafficked DEED health and safety eLearning courses for educators as well as the student facing courses on suicide prevention and those under the Alaska Safe Children’s Act.

DEED Online eLearning Courses	Oct- December 2021	Lifetime Number of Participants
	Number of Participants	
Part A Suicide Awareness	753	15,877
Part B Suicide Prevention	354	11,069
Part C Suicide Intervention	232	6,966
Part D Responding to Suicide- Postvention Guidelines	153	5,521
Overcoming ACEs in Alaskan Schools	210	2,144
Trauma-Engaged and Practicing Schools	65	1,171
Trauma-Sensitive Schools	77	1,423
Classroom Practices	50	697
Emotional Intelligence	52	694
Family Partnerships	25	528
Mind-Body Connections	44	606
Childhood Traumatic Grief	57	881
Self-Regulation	48	586
Self-Care	101	562
Trauma-Engaged Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health	29	172
Overcoming Anxiety and Stress in Alaskan Schools (Released Spring 21)	84	234
Opioids 101 and the Opioid Epidemic 101	10	189
Narcan Administration for an Opioid Epidemic	13	242
E-Cigarette Use Among Alaska Teens (Released Summer 21)	33	61
Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Training for Educators	1,266	30,230
Mandated Reporters of Child Abuse & Neglect	1,578	35,033

Navigating Transitions (student courses)	66	1,815
Brees Law (student courses)	516	1,002
Total Participants	5,816	117,703

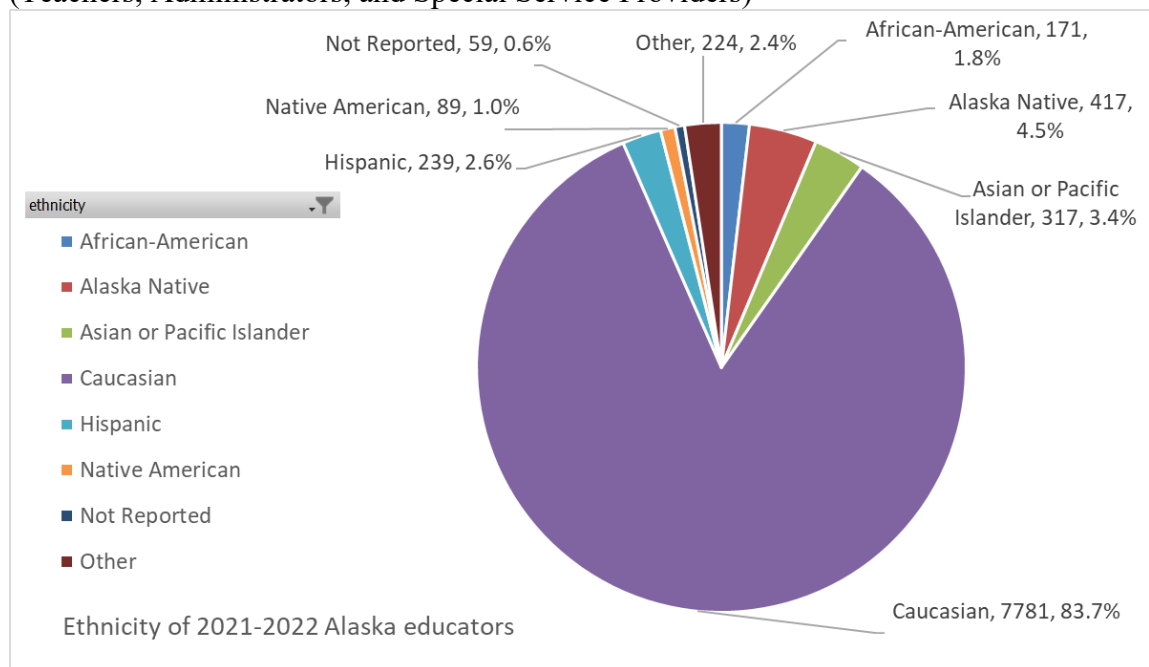
Special Education

- The special education team will be presenting at the Alaska State Special Education Conference (ASSEC) on the state special education handbook, which will include specific instruction on how to properly support students in the progression of their graduation credit courses with the implementation of 4 AAC 06.078 (alternate courses for graduation credit for students on an IEP).
 - This presentation will focus on supports and resources to help special education teachers, directors, and families in supporting students with disabilities.

Teacher Certification

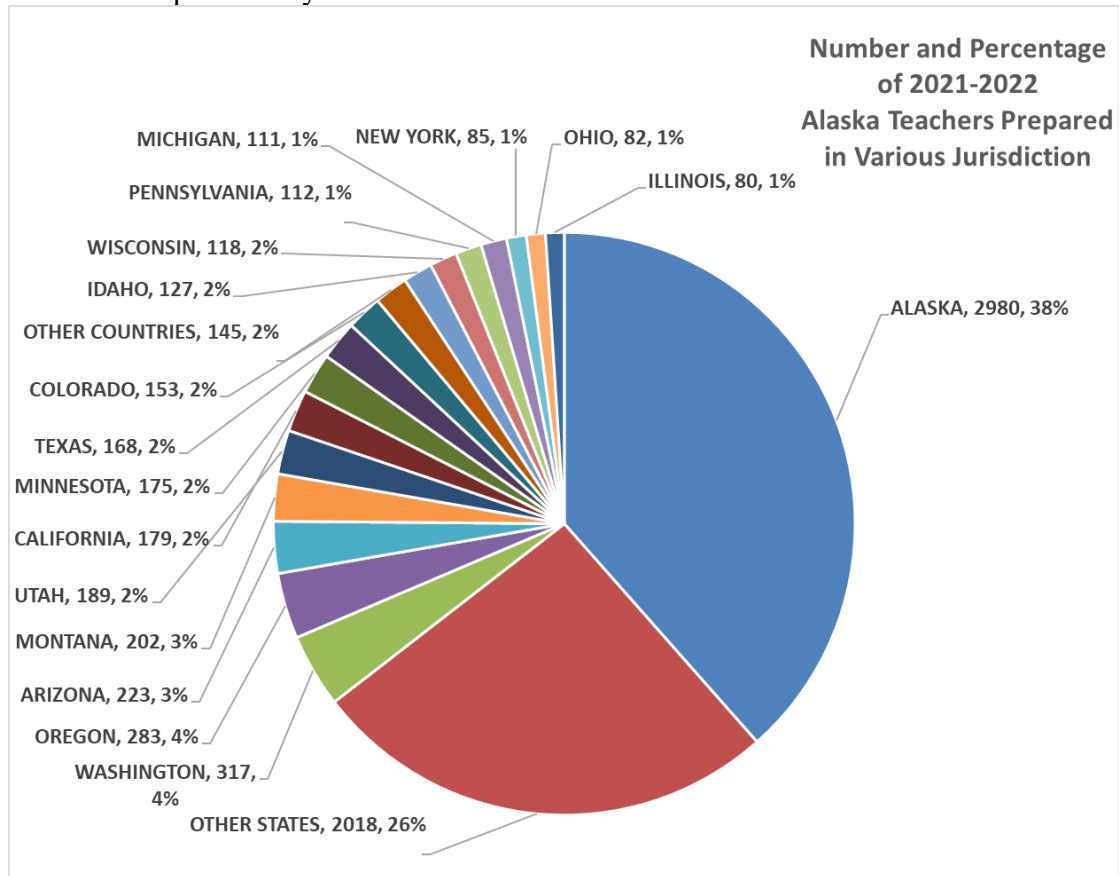
- 2021-2022 Alaska Educator Data
Alaska School Districts are required by statute and regulation to report to the department October 15th of each year information concerning their certified and classified employees. This information in combination with teacher certification data is compiled to provide information to the legislature, the state board, and the public. Below are state level data concerning educators currently employed in Alaska public schools.

- Certified Educators' Ethnicity
(Teachers, Administrators, and Special Service Providers)



The graph shows that for the 2021-2022 school year that almost 84% of Alaska educators are Caucasian.

○ Teacher Preparation by Jurisdiction



The graph shows that 38% of Alaska’s current teachers were prepared by approved educator preparation program located in Alaska. The other 62% of Alaska’s current teachers were prepared in approved educator preparation programs located in other states or countries.

○ National Board Certified Teachers (NBCT)

School District	Number of NBCT
Anchorage School District	50
Annette Island School District	1
Bering Strait School District	1
Fairbanks North Star Borough School District	30
Hoonah City School District	1
Juneau Borough School District	5
Kenai Peninsula Borough School District	5
Ketchikan Gateway Borough School District	1
Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District	11
North Slope Borough School District	1
Total	106

Currently, 106 of Alaska’s educators have earned National Board Certification. Ten of Alaska’s 54 districts employ one or more NBCT.

- The data sources for the information provided are the 2021 Certified Staff Accounting data collection and the Teacher Certification database. More information about the Certified Staff Accounting data collection is located [here](https://education.alaska.gov/forms/05-22-008.docx) (education.alaska.gov/forms/05-22-008.docx).
- **Equitable Access to Excellent Educators**
Teacher Education and Certification in collaboration with the Title IIA Program has updated Alaska’s Equity Plan to “Increase equitable access to experienced and effective educators.” The [website](#) outlines a new logic model for meeting this challenge and the statewide committee will work with DEED to create tools for the districts to implement a plan locally.

**Alaska’s Education Challenge Priority #5:
Improve the safety and well-being of students through school partnerships with families, communities, and tribes.**

Director Updates

- DEED has partnered with NWPBIS to offer professional development in Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) to a cohort of schools over a three-year period. PBIS “isn’t a curriculum you purchase or something you learn during a one-day professional development training. It is a commitment to addressing student behavior through systems change. When it’s implemented well, students achieve improved social and academic outcomes, schools experience reduced exclusionary discipline practices, and school personnel feel more effective.” (<https://www.pbis.org/pbis/getting-started>)
 - The first cohort will begin this year, with up to 25 schools participating. New cohorts will begin in school years 2022-2023 and 2023-2024.
 - Each cohort will attend the NWPBIS Conference and receive support from NWPBIS for implementation over the next few years.
 - Each cohort will purchase a management system for tracking behaviors in efforts to provide data that will increase positive behavior. The management system will be part of the grant support from DEED.

Health & Safety

- The Rural student Behavioral Health counseling COVID Recovery and Response position, supported by Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, has been critical to supporting rural schools.
 - This position onboarded and provided direct services to eight out of the 11 districts in this quarter including: Chugach, Pelican, Southwest, Pribilof, Tanana, Bristol Bay, Iditarod, and Yukon Flats School Districts.
 - This position provided eight professional development trainings to more than 300 people from rural school districts, statewide school staff, and community stakeholders on topics such as school mental health, trauma engaged framework, family partnerships, staff wellness, and student mental health.
 - This position is actively providing social and emotional learning support for coping with COVID-19, lessons to support student well-being according to grade level. Through these lessons during the last quarter, approximately 90 students have obtained social and emotional support through the coping with COVID-19 series.

- Lastly, this position is actively providing individual social and emotional support to three students from two rural school districts via telehealth in partnership with caregivers.

Other Updates

COVID Fiscal Team

- Districts have recently updated required mitigation plans and district ARP plans to DEED, as required by the American Rescue Plan Act. DEED is working with districts by providing technical assistance to help districts complete, update, and revise their mitigation plans and district ARP plans as needs arise. DEED also provides monthly technical support to districts through the "COVID Coffee Break," recurring and informal, virtual office hours provided to districts for additional support.
- Districts are continuing to complete and revise their funding applications for FY2022 COVID-19 Relief funding to include funds from the Coronavirus Aid Relief and Economic Security (CARES), Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA), and American Rescue Plan (ARP) Acts. Districts are finding innovative ways to use the funds to support a variety of identified needs within their districts.
 - Many districts are purchasing new reading curriculum and high interest reading materials to support Alaska's Education Challenge of supporting students to read at grade level by the end of third grade.
 - Many districts are hiring additional staff to address learning loss deficits and enhance students' reading progress.
 - Many districts are finding innovative ways to supplement their existing CTE efforts by expanding opportunities offered to students using these funds. Other districts are finding innovative ways to incorporate culturally relevant educational activities using these funds.
 - Many districts are providing incentives to staff so they can recruit and retain effective education professionals including nurses, mental health practitioners, janitors, support staff, and teachers.
 - Many districts are using these funds to coordinate school partnerships with families, community organizations, and tribes.

ESEA Federal Programs

- The ESEA Federal Programs team is hosting its annual ESEA Consolidated Application Technical Assistance Workshop virtually the week of April 18. This workshop provides guidance and technical assistance to districts in complying with the provisions under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). DEED staff provide programmatic and Grant Management System (GMS) application updates to approximately 115 district staff throughout the State. The team is currently seeking district presentation proposals with a focus on innovative ways they are using their ESEA funding to address the Alaska's Education Challenge.