

**To: Members of the State Board of  
Education & Early Development**

**June 4, 2025**

**From: Deena Bishop, ED. D., Commissioner**

**Agenda Item: 20**

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**◆ ISSUE**

The board is being asked to approve Career and Technical Education (CTE) Program Recognition awards forwarded by the State Board's Career and Technical Education (CTE) Committee. The attached nominees were selected for CTE Program Recognition.

**◆ BACKGROUND**

- The CTE Committee recently met to select the CTE Program Recognition awardees from among nominations received from the public and Department of Education and Early Development staff. Nominations were considered in one of two categories: Effective Student Engagement and Work-Based Learning.
- The attached nominees are being forwarded by the CTE Committee for endorsement by the whole State Board of Education.
- The list of the nominees by category can be found behind this cover page.

**OPTIONS**

Seek more information.

Adopt the proposed regulations in business item 10.

**• SUGGESTED MOTION**

I move the State Board of Education and Early Development award the following nine nominees for the Culturally Relevant Career and Technical Education Program Recognition, 1) Razdolna Welding Program; 2) Housing Build Project – Matanuska Susitna Borough School District; 3) Skagway School Woodshop, Aaron Schmidt (teacher) – Skagway School District. 4) Galena Interior Learning Academy (GILA) Aviation Program – Galena School District;

## **2025 proposed SBOE Career and Technical Education (CTE) Program Recognition**

### Student Engagement & Work-Based Learning

**Razdolna Welding Program, Wayne McManus (teacher) and Michael Sturm (principal) – Kenai Peninsula School District.** Since its inception in November of 2023, the Razdolna School welding program has transformed the educational landscape for its students by integrating real-world application with problem-solving and career-focused efforts. The program serves Middle and High School students through strong emphasis on community collaboration and the local commercial fishing industry. While started with personal donated equipment outdoors under a tarp, community members contributed expertise and heavy equipment to student efforts to build and weld work stations in a connex container to continue to utilize the outdoor space even in cold weather. Students have earned AWS Welding and Engine Theory industry certifications. This is a prime example of innovative thinking and deep commitment to student success making a lasting impact.

**Housing Build Project – Matanuska Susitna Borough School District.** This project has been made possible through partnerships with the State of Alaska, 62 Degrees North Customs, MSBSD Facilities Department, MassX, and Cruz Construction. The project constructed a pole barn and assembly pad at Mat-Su Career and Technical High School that allows the building pathway students and instructors to construct a one-bedroom efficiency portable housing unit. Upon completion the units can be barged to rural locations where a shortage of housing for teachers exists. If successful, this model will be able to be implemented at other CTE schools to alleviate the critical teacher housing shortage in rural Alaska.

**Skagway School Woodshop, Aaron Schmidt (teacher) – Skagway School District.** Three years ago, Aaron brought a master woodworker from Oregon up to Skagway to expose students to unique designs for everyday items like shelves, stools, and tables. The program's projects are student interest and community focused and have evolved to include: stools, bird and dog houses, memorial benches, skateboards, wooden swords, bridges for the city's disk-golf course, and taking over a task once assigned to the public works department of the city - building raised garden beds for older and disabled community members. Aaron described the building process as "an opportunity to use our skills for service, to help the lives of people we probably don't even know. There's not really a celebratory payoff. There's no applause. I like that."

### Work-Based Learning

**Galena Interior Learning Academy (GILA) Aviation Program – Galena School District.** This program is possible through partnerships with Blue River Aviation, Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, the local Loudon Tribe, and a turn-key instructional program pre-approved by the Federal Aviation Administration. The GILA Aviation Program objective is to prepare students to start their aviation careers through aviation exposure, flight instruction, aviation based theoretical knowledge, and an understanding of aviation safety. The program provides relevant experiences for rural and urban students and allows students a pathway to post-secondary careers that are a necessity for the economy and way of life not only in their home communities, but throughout all the communities of Alaska.