

SENATE BILL NO. 197

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY SENATOR THOMAS

Introduced: 2/10/12

Referred: Education, Finance

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 **"An Act establishing a grant program in the Department of Education and Early**
2 **Development for achieving excellence in public schools."**

3 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

4 * **Section 1.** AS 14.17.480 is repealed and reenacted to read:

5 **Sec. 14.17.480. Achieving excellence grant program.** (a) A grant program is
6 established in the department for the purpose of awarding grants to achieve excellence
7 in public schools that have failed to meet academic standards adopted by the board for
8 adequate yearly progress. The program is subject to appropriation. Total annual
9 awards may not exceed an amount equal to the number of students who drop out of
10 school in the fiscal year in which the grants are awarded, multiplied by \$400.

11 (b) A school district may apply for a project grant under this section on a form
12 approved by the department. The district shall provide a matching cash amount equal
13 to not less than 10 percent or more than 40 percent of the total project cost from any
14 source of funds available to the district. The department shall annually determine the

percentage for the match required for all districts on the basis of the availability of state funding for the program so that a higher match will result from lower state funding.

(c) The department may approve a grant application only for a proposed grant project for which the district provides persuasive evidence that the project

(1) is designed to address known causes of failure of a school in the district to meet standards for adequate yearly progress adopted by the board;

(2) applies best practices that are research-based;

(3) will be sustainable beyond the grant funding period;

(4) establishes locally determined and measurable goals for success that include improvements in student achievement, academic interest, attendance, and graduation rates;

(5) includes a process for providing regular evaluations and reporting to the department.

(d) The department shall review the progress of a grant project funded under this section not less frequently than once every two years. A project that the department determines is making sufficient progress toward the short-term and long-term goals established for the project may, at the discretion of the department, be continued for not more than two additional years on request of the grantee. The department shall discontinue, on 30 days' notice to the grantee, a project that is failing to make sufficient progress toward the short-term and long-term goals established for the project.

(e) A district may reapply for and the department may provide grant funding beyond an initial four-year grant period if the department determines the project is demonstrating significant success.

(f) If appropriations are insufficient to fund all qualified grant projects in a year, the department shall allocate annual appropriations to the program established under this section to qualified grant projects on a pro rata basis.

* **Sec. 2.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to read:

ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE GRANT PROGRAM; FIRST YEAR. Notwithstanding

1 the maximum amount established for annual grant awards under AS 14.17.480, added by sec.
2 1 of this Act, the maximum cumulative grants awarded by the Department of Education and
3 Early Development for the first year of the program shall be calculated by multiplying the
4 number of students who drop out of school each year, averaged over the 10 years preceding
5 the effective date of this Act, by \$4,800. If insufficient money is appropriated for the first year
6 of the program to meet the number of qualified grant projects, the department shall allocate
7 the awards on a pro rata basis.