

ALASKA STATE SENATE



SENATOR FRED DYSON

Sponsor Statement for SSSB 41

“An Act relating to student participation in interscholastic activities in religious and other private schools; and providing for an effective date.”

SSSB 41 would amend current statutes to make participation in interscholastic activities at a non-public school available to a larger number of students who are otherwise not eligible to participate. This bill defines the eligibility rules for interscholastic activities for high school students enrolled full time in an alternative education program allowing qualified students to participate in interscholastic activity programs offered through a non-public school, and further clarifies the definition of an alternative education program so as to not prohibit homeschool students from participating if they receive supplemental online instruction from outside of the state.

In 1997 the Alaska Legislature passed into law HB 158 which allowed for school children enrolled in private, correspondence or home school programs, to also enroll as part-time students in a school district.

In 2012 the Alaska Legislature passed SB 119 which allowed for high school children enrolled in an alternative education program to also participate in interscholastic activities available at a *public school*. As non-public (private) schools were not addressed in the law, the Alaska School Activities Association has recently advised home school parents that their children are ineligible to participate in high school interscholastic activities at a non-public school.

This was not the intent of the original bill sponsor of SB 119, and not consistent with the legislative efforts over the past two decades to increase opportunities for choice in education through alternative education programs and opportunities to support maximum student participation in interscholastic programs.

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