

ALASKA LEGISLATURE

Representative Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins

Angoon · Coffman Cove · Craig · Edna Bay · Elfin Cove · Game Creek · Hollis · Hoonah · Kake · Kasaan · Klawock · Kupreanof · Naukati
Pelican · Petersburg · Point Baker · Port Alexander · Port Protection · Sitka · Tenakee Springs · Thorne Bay · Whale Pass

rep.jonathan.kreiss-tomkins@akleg.gov

Committees:
State Affairs, Chair
Fisheries
Judiciary



Juneau, Alaska 99801 (Jan. – April)
State Capitol, Room 411
907.465.3732

Sitka, Alaska 99835 (May – Dec.)
201 Katlian Street, Ste. 103
907.747.4665

Sponsor Statement

HB 102 – Limited Teacher Certificates

Language immersion education is an increasingly popular educational model that also produces impressive academic outcomes. In an immersion program, some of the academic subject matter is delivered in a language other than English. HB 102 provides needed flexibility to school districts and charter schools operating language immersion programs.

HB 102 expands the existing “Type M” and “Type I” teacher certificates, tackling one of the biggest challenges facing Alaska’s immersion programs: finding fully certified teachers also fluent in a Native or foreign language. HB 102 provides districts and charter schools case-by-case flexibility to hire language teachers they know are qualified to lead a classroom but who – for reasons such as limited English proficiency, advanced age, or familial responsibilities – are unable at the time to get a full teacher certification.

Alaska already has a variety of successful and popular immersion programs, including Wasilla’s Fronteras, Anchorage’s Rilke Schule, and Anchorage School District’s highly regarded world languages program.

Immersion is also central to Alaska Native language revitalization efforts. In Israel, New Zealand, and Hawaii, immersion education was at the core of indigenous language revival. At Ayaprun Elitnaurvik in Bethel, instruction is done in Yup’ik, and interest in Alaska Native language immersion education is growing elsewhere in the state.

HB 102 will help Alaska’s language immersion programs continue to provide high-quality dual-language education.