

RE: Please pass HB64 and its companion bill SB27

Dear Representative Drummond,

As a parent of adult children who struggled and suffered inadequate reading instruction I am appalled as I listen to the parents of young students who are experiencing the same education pitfalls which existed more than a decade ago. All the money, all the time which has lapsed with NO improvements, UNACCEPTABLE.

Section 1: (1) Having the information that we Alaskans have a school system which is 5th from the bottom in reading proficiency (according to the National Assessment of Educational Progress – NAEP) UNACCEPTABLE. Our children and citizens deserve better. For me as a mom experiencing less than qualified teachers who sincerely were trying they just did not have the training or the curriculum. They didn't even know what they didn't know!

Similarly, the professors at the University of Alaska who train our teachers are not highly knowledgeable and skilled teachers of reading. If they themselves are not qualified how can they possibly provide the correct instruction for our future teachers? Within the education degree program at University of Alaska there should be at least 15 credits of reading science. To meet Alaska's immediate need for highly qualified professors, the University of Alaska can partner with established reading science on line programs, as they currently do for speech language. This is important please, please approach this now and with fervor.

This task force needs to create permanency of a good reading law. We should have a fiscal note to cover the cost of nationally recognized experts to be on this task force. The value that an expert in this field brings is unquestionably what we need in Alaska.

Thank you, Representative Drummond for braving this topic with the introduction of this bill.

Best Regards,

Martha H. Gingras

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