

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

WHILE IN SESSION
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HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES
COMMITTEE

EDUCATION COMMITTEE



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SENATOR Tom Begich
SENATE DISTRICT J

SB99: Alaska Early Education Program Sectional Analysis

Section 1.

Establishes that elementary schools also includes an early education program, whether operated within a public school or by an outside organization.

Section 2.

Establishes that a four or five year old, who has not attended kindergarten, is eligible to attend a public school early education program.

Section 3.

Creates a stair-step, 3-year grant program to provide training and assist a school district in developing an early education program. In year one, the lowest performing 20% of school districts (as established in 2017) will be eligible for a grant to establish a district-wide, high quality early education program. In year two, the next lowest performing 20 % of school districts will be eligible for the three year grant program to establish an early education program. At the end of the three year grant cycle, the Department of Education and Early Development (the department) will be responsible for determining if the district's early education program complies with state standards. The grants will be available to the next lowest 20% of school districts until all school districts are offered the opportunity to participate included.

Section 4.

Directs the department to supervise all early education programs and approve those early education programs created by the early education grant program.

Section 5.

Defines an "early education program" as a pre-kindergarten school for students 3-5 years old if its primary function is educational. The 3 year old students are not included in the program this bill proposes, but are included to ensure they are not excluded from existing State and Federal programs.

Section 6.

Directs the board to adopt regulations regarding funding as well as statewide and local goals for an early education program. Regulations shall ensure that early education programs have the flexibility to be locally designed and culturally appropriate, so long as they meet early

education standards. An early education program may be either full day (6 hour) or half day (at least 2 hours).

Section 7.

For funding purposes, an early education student shall be counted in the school district's average daily membership as a half day student once the early education program has been approved by the department.

Section 8.

Adds early education to consideration for determining the number of elementary schools in a district.

Section 9.

Ensures that early education students who currently receive State or Federal funding for early education are not included in the ADM for purposes of funding.

Section 10.

Directs early education program staff to be included in those organizations required to report evidence of child abuse.

Section 11.

Repeals the early education grant program in 10 years, once all school districts have had the opportunity to apply.