

Alaska State Legislature

Senate Education Committee

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SECTIONAL ANALYSIS

SENATE BILL 114 (Version A)

Education Transformation Act

- Sec. 1-2: AS 14.03.073 (a-b) The first two sections are technical amendments to existing statute regarding challenging courses for core credit in math, sciences, language arts, etc, setting things up for section 3 below.
- Sec. 3: AS 14.03.073 (e) Recognizes credit for extra curricular activities of students, adding a new requirement for school districts to allow course credit for career and technical education, physical education, music, or art classes for an activity, including a cultural activity, outside of school hours.
- Sec. 4: AS 14.03.078 (a) amends the existing Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) annual reporting requirements to include a categorized summary of administrative and teaching staff within each school district. The new requirements also include reporting the following ratios for each school district:
- Administrators : Students
 - Administrators : Teachers
 - Teachers : Students
- Sec. 5: AS 14.03.078 (c) Adds additional reporting requirements that school districts must post in prominent locations around the district, including on their websites, the ratios reported under subsection (a), described above in section 4.
- (d) provides definitions for:
- (1) An “administrative employee” as “an employee who does not provide direct classroom instruction for students as a regular part” of their job; and
 - (2) “classroom teacher” as being certificated, instructing students, preparing course outlines, assigning work, administering and grading exams, maintaining classroom order, and communicating student progress with parents.

SECTIONAL ANALYSIS – SB 114 (version A)
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- Sec. 6: AS 14.07.168 Regarding an annual report submitted to the Legislature by the state Board of Education and Early Development, amended to include in that report a current summary of middle college activity and outcomes in the state.
- Sec. 7: AS 14.14.115 (a) regards Cooperative Arrangement Grants (CAGs) issued by the department when districts find efficiencies by sharing administrative or educational services with other districts. This section is amended to expand CAGs to include not only district to district cooperations, but also between districts and businesses, non-profits, and other state government agencies. It also increases the CAG cap from \$100,000 to \$200,000.
- Sec. 8: AS 14.14.115 (d) adds new requirements for CAG eligibility, including that if two school districts enter into a cooperative grant, at least one must be a rural district.
- (e) establishes that if a cooperative grant is used for health insurance pooling with the State, the grant can only be used to pay for the costs of transferring district employees to the State insurance plan, not for the cost of participating in the new insurance policy;
 - (f) allows a school district to carry forward the savings realized by a CAG during the first three years after the grant is awarded. The savings will not be counted towards the fund balance limit established in AS 14.17.505(a) [Section 8 below];
 - (g) defines “rural school district” consistent with use of the term elsewhere in statute, and defined in AS 14.11.025(c).
- Sec. 9: AS 14.17.505(a) is amended to increase the maximum cap of a district’s unreserved (“emergency”) fund balance from 10% to 15% of its operating budget, and allows an additional amount to be reserved related to CAGs described above in section 7.
- Sec. 10: AS 14.20.020 (i) is amended to describe a regimented process for the state board to evaluate and adjust minimum passing scores on required competency exams for persons to qualify for teacher certification.
- Sec. 11: AS 14.20.380 (b) adds a requirement for DEED to provide administrative support services to the Professional Teaching Practices Commission (PTPC).
- Sec. 12: AS 14.20.460 (5) adds a duty for the PTPC to reduce its administrative costs by accepting support services from DEED.

SECTIONAL ANALYSIS – SB II4 (version A)
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- Sec. 13: AS 14.30.760 - A new article 15 is created describing the Virtual Education Consortium.
- (a) DEED shall establish and maintain a database of virtual education courses available to all districts, students, and teachers.
 - (b) Requires the consortium to provide training and professional development for teachers facilitating courses offered through the consortium.
 - (c) DEED may require a fee paid by school districts making use of the consortium, determined in regulation and limited to a prorated consideration of the costs associated with maintaining the consortium.
 - (d) Allows the consortium to require districts that provide courses or have students taking courses through the consortium to adopt a shared calendar and a shared bell schedule for at least a portion of the school day.
 - (e) Provides a definition for “virtual education” or “virtual instruction” as that delivered through telecommunications or the internet.
- Sec. 14: AS 14.30.775 is a new Article 16 describing the District Reading Intervention Program (RIP).
- (a) Each district shall establish a RIP for students in grade K-3 to ensure students struggling with reading can read at or above grade level by the end of grade 3.
 - 1. Students will be screened once in the Fall, Winter, and Spring;
 - 2. Establish a plan and procedures to intervene for students identified as struggling with reading;
 - 3. Implement the plan during regular school hours through any available method.
 - (b) Within 15 days notify, and then regularly update the parents of students identified as struggling with reading, and include a description and progress of the plan being developed to assist the student’s improvement;
 - (c) Details the manner in which districts must provide intensive reading services and monitor student progress toward grade level reading;
 - (d) Districts must offer an intensive acceleration class that is of small size and accounts for most of a student’s contact time each school day.
 - (e) Each district must submit an annual report to DEED detailing the number of students who have needed to participate in a RIP and their progress toward reading proficiency.
 - (f) DEED shall approve of a universal screening tool to assess student reading levels, and in turn report annually on statewide reading proficiency in grades K-3.

SECTIONAL ANALYSIS – SB 114 (version A)

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- Sec. 15: AS 14.30 is amended to add a new Article 15 regarding Dual Credit.
- AS 14.30.780 (a) Establishes a Middle College program for eligible students in high school to enroll in courses at the University of Alaska, and to earn credit toward a college degree as well as credit toward high school graduation.
- (b) Every school district shall enter into an agreement with the UA to participate in the AMC, giving access to any eligible student to participate in the program.
- (c) Eligibility: Establishes baseline student eligibility requirements to include being enrolled in a public school, be in high school (grades 9-12), to not have already received a high school diploma, and demonstrate to the satisfaction of both the school district and the UA as being academically competent to complete college level coursework.
- (d) Awareness: Requires school districts to establish and maintain awareness of AMC course offerings and eligibility requirements to students and parents, including the academic and social responsibilities of participating in the AMC.
- (e) Financing: A student -may- be required to pay fees associated with costs of participating in the program. Meanwhile districts and the UA shall include in their respective MOU a manner of sharing costs associated with providing the AMC program locally, including tuition waivers, scholarships, and other means of reducing program costs and finding efficiencies.
- (f) Course Quality: specifies that courses offered by the AMC must meet quality and content standards, including quality instruction, and regular course and instructor review.
- (g) Credit Cap: Under the AMC program, students may not enroll in more than 12 credit hours (full-time) per semester, nor earn more than a total of 60 credits (associates degree).
- (h) ADM: Holds harmless a school district's Average Daily Membership (ADM) calculation. Students participating in the AMC program are to still be counted toward the respective school district's ADM.
- (i) Transcripts: Allows the UA and school districts to exchange student transcript information for purposes of determining program eligibility or for graduation requirements.
- (j) Definitions: Provides definitions for use of the term "program" in this section as being the AMC program, and for "school district" as consistent with other uses of that term in statute, as defined on AS 14.30.350.

SECTIONAL ANALYSIS – SB 114 (version A)
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Sec. 16: AS 14.40.040, relating to general powers and duties of the UA, is amended adding a new subsection as follows:

(c) UA must implement the AMC and may not require an eligible student to meet any additional criteria to receive credit under the program than what was completed by the program itself. UA must further regularly review the AMC course content and quality of instruction to meet national standards for dual credit, enter into MOUs with school districts consistent with the AMC, and award student credit for course completion of AMC courses, which will be fully transferable within the UA system.

Sec. 17: AS 14.40.190(b) Amends existing University of Alaska reporting requirements regarding teacher training and retention, to specify the report is required to be submitted to the Legislature (Senate Secretary / House Chief Clerk) biennially, by the 30th legislative day of the first regular session of each new Legislature.

(a) It then clarifies that this report is to be presented in a formal hearing setting to the education committees. The scheduling of such a presentation is intended to be coordinated at the discretion of the chairs of the committees.

Sec. 18: AS 14.40.190(c) is a new subsection establishing a requirement for the University of Alaska to issue a semiannual report on the status of all of its accreditations within the UA system. The reports must be submitted to the Legislature (Senate Secretary / House Chief Clerk):

- (a) by the 30th legislative day of each regular session of the legislature; and
- (b) on or by July 1st of each year.

The accreditation reports are subsequently to be presented in a formal hearing setting to the education committees of the legislature, the scheduling for which are intended to be at the discretion of the chairs of the committees.

Sec. 19: Establishes a temporary Virtual Education Task Force, led by the Commissioner of DEED, and comprised of leaders in education technology, to assemble one year prior to the effective date of the bill, who are charged with developing the initial structure and functionality of the Virtual Education Consortium described in Section 12 of the bill.

Sec. 20: Sections 4, 5, 7–12 and 19 have immediate effective dates.

Sec. 21: Sections 1–3, 6, and 13–16 have an effective date of July 1, 2020.