

**SPONSOR SUBSTITUTE FOR SENATE BILL NO. 6**  
**IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA**  
**THIRTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION**

**BY SENATORS BEGICH, Kawasaki, Stevens, Olson, Kiehl, Gray-Jackson, Giessel**

**Introduced: 1/21/20**

**Referred: Education, Finance**

**A BILL**

**FOR AN ACT ENTITLED**

1   **"An Act relating to early education programs provided by school districts; relating to**  
2   **funding for early education programs; relating to the duties of the Department of**  
3   **Education and Early Development; establishing a reading intervention program for**  
4   **public school students enrolled in grades kindergarten through three; establishing a**  
5   **literacy program in the Department of Education and Early Development; and**  
6   **providing for an effective date."**

7   **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

8       **\* Section 1.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section  
9   to read:

10           SHORT TITLE. This Act may be known as the Alaska Reads Act.

11       **\* Sec. 2.** AS 14.03.060(e) is amended to read:

12               (e) In addition to the grades enumerated in (a) of this section, an elementary  
13   school consists of **an early education** [A PRE-ELEMENTARY] program **approved**

or supervised by the department under AS 14.07.020(a)(8), including a program operated by a head start agency [THE DEPARTMENT] as a head start program under 42 U.S.C. 9831 - 9852c [AS 14.38.010, OR LOCATED IN A PUBLIC SCHOOL FOR FEDERAL FUNDING PURPOSES. EXCEPT FOR A CHILD WITH A DISABILITY WHO IS RECEIVING SPECIAL EDUCATION OR RELATED SERVICES UNDER AS 14.30.180 - 14.30.350, PRE-ELEMENTARY STUDENTS MAY NOT BE COUNTED IN A SCHOOL'S AVERAGE DAILY MEMBERSHIP UNDER AS 14.17].

\* **Sec. 3.** AS 14.03.072(a) is amended to read:

(a) Each school district shall annually provide to parents and guardians of students enrolled in kindergarten through grade three in a public school in the state current information on the importance of early literacy, including

(1) intervention strategies and reading intervention services provided under AS 14.30.765;

(2) home literacy plans;

(3) grade retention standards and policies for the elementary school attended;

(4) strategies and resources to help children learn to read.

\* **Sec. 4.** AS 14.03.080 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

(g) A child who is at least four, but not more than five, years of age on or before September 1 following the beginning of the school year and who has not attended a public school kindergarten may enter a public school early education program.

\* **Sec. 5.** AS 14.03.120 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

(h) To the extent allowable under state and federal privacy laws, each district shall annually report to the department and publish on the district's Internet website information from the previous school year regarding

(1) the number and percentage of students

(A) in grades kindergarten through three who performed below grade level on statewide reading screenings or assessments, by grade;

(B) retained in grades kindergarten through three;

(C) in grade three who demonstrated sufficient reading skills for grade progression based on the statewide reading screening or assessment;

(D) in grade three who demonstrated sufficient reading skills for grade progression based on an alternative standardized reading screening or assessment;

(E) in grade three who demonstrated sufficient reading skills for grade progression based on a student reading portfolio;

(F) in grade three who progressed to grade four based on a good cause exemption under AS 14.30.765(f);

(2) the performance on statewide reading screenings or assessments of students in a grade above grade three who were retained in grade three under AS 14.30.765(e) or who progressed to grade four based on a good cause exemption under AS 14.30.765(f).

\* **Sec. 6.** AS 14.03 is amended by adding a new section to read:

**Sec. 14.03.135. Early education programs; grants.** (a) The department shall provide training and assist districts in the development of early education programs, and shall approve early education programs that meet the standards adopted by the board under AS 14.07.165(a)(5). If the department determines that the district's early education program complies with the standards, the department shall approve the early education program. If the department determines that the district's early education program does not comply with the standards, the department shall provide assistance to the district to improve the early education program to meet the standards.

(b) The department may award a grant to an eligible district to provide funding for a three-year period for the development of a district-wide early education program. At the end of the three-year grant period, the department shall assess the district's early education program and determine whether the program complies with the standards adopted under AS 14.07.165(a)(5).

(c) The department shall rank the performance of all districts in the state in accordance with the accountability system and performance designations required under AS 14.03.123. The department shall divide all districts into six groups based on performance ranking. Each group of districts is eligible for a three-year grant in the

1 following fiscal years:

2 (1) for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2020, the lowest performing 10  
3 percent of districts;

4 (2) for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2021, the second lowest  
5 performing 15 percent of districts;

6 (3) for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2022, the third lowest  
7 performing 15 percent of districts;

8 (4) for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2023, the third highest  
9 performing 20 percent of districts;

10 (5) for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024, the second highest  
11 performing 20 percent of districts;

12 (6) for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, the highest performing  
13 20 percent of districts.

14 (d) In each fiscal year, the department may award a three-year grant to a  
15 district that applies in a format prescribed by the department and that is in a group of  
16 districts that

17 (1) is eligible for a grant during that fiscal year under (c) of this  
18 section; or

19 (2) was eligible for a grant in a previous fiscal year under (c) of this  
20 section, but did not receive a grant under this section in a previous fiscal year.

21 (e) If the department does not approve a district's early education program at  
22 the end of the three-year grant period, the department may provide a one-year  
23 remediation grant to allow the district one additional fiscal year to meet the early  
24 education program standards adopted by the board under AS 14.07.165(a)(5). If the  
25 district is unable to meet the early education program standards at the end of the fiscal  
26 year, the department may, in the discretion of the commissioner, provide an additional  
27 remediation grant to allow the district not more than one additional fiscal year to meet  
28 the standards. Nothing in this section prohibits a district from using its own funds to  
29 continue the remediation process.

30 (f) A student in an early education program may not be counted in the district  
31 ADM under AS 14.17.500 or 14.17.905 until after the department determines that the

early education program complies with the standards adopted by the board under AS 14.07.165(a)(5) and approves the program. The department may not approve an early education program developed with a grant awarded under (b) of this section until the end of the three-year grant period under (b) of this section or the additional remediation period under (e) of this section. The department may approve a district's early education program that does not receive a grant under this section at any time if the early education program complies with the standards adopted by the board under AS 14.07.165(a)(5).

(g) A grant under this section is subject to appropriation, but may not supplant other early education funding available to districts.

(h) In this section,

(1) "ADM" has the meaning given in AS 14.17.990;

(2) "district" has the meaning given in AS 14.17.990;

(3) "early education program" means a program for children who are four and five years of age and who have not attended a public school kindergarten if the program's primary function is educational.

\* **Sec. 7.** AS 14.07.020(a) is amended to read:

(a) The department shall

(1) exercise general supervision over the public schools of the state except the University of Alaska;

(2) study the conditions and needs of the public schools of the state, adopt or recommend plans, administer and evaluate grants to improve school performance awarded under AS 14.03.125, and adopt regulations for the improvement of the public schools; the department may consult with the University of Alaska to develop secondary education requirements to improve student achievement in college preparatory courses;

(3) provide advisory and consultative services to all public school governing bodies and personnel;

(4) prescribe by regulation a minimum course of study for the public schools; the regulations must provide that, if a course in American Sign Language is given, the course shall be given credit as a course in a foreign language;

1 (5) establish, in coordination with the Department of Health and Social  
 2 Services, a program for the continuing education of children who are held in detention  
 3 facilities in the state during the period of detention;

4 (6) accredit those public schools that meet accreditation standards  
 5 prescribed by regulation by the department; these regulations shall be adopted by the  
 6 department and presented to the legislature during the first 10 days of any regular  
 7 session, and become effective 45 days after presentation or at the end of the session,  
 8 whichever is earlier, unless disapproved by a resolution concurred in by a majority of  
 9 the members of each house;

10 (7) prescribe by regulation, after consultation with the state fire  
 11 marshal and the state sanitarian, standards that will ensure healthful and safe  
 12 conditions in the public and private schools of the state, including a requirement of  
 13 physical examinations and immunizations in pre-elementary schools; the standards for  
 14 private schools may not be more stringent than those for public schools;

15 (8) exercise general supervision over early education programs  
 16 [PRE-ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS] that receive direct state or federal funding,  
 17 including early education programs provided by a school district for students  
 18 four and five years of age, and approve early education programs that meet the  
 19 standards adopted by the board under AS 14.07.165(a)(5);

20 (9) exercise general supervision over elementary and secondary  
 21 correspondence study programs offered by municipal school districts or regional  
 22 educational attendance areas; the department may also offer and make available to any  
 23 Alaskan through a centralized office a correspondence study program;

24 (10) accredit private schools that request accreditation and that meet  
 25 accreditation standards prescribed by regulation by the department; nothing in this  
 26 paragraph authorizes the department to require religious or other private schools to be  
 27 licensed;

28 (11) review plans for construction of new public elementary and  
 29 secondary schools and for additions to and major rehabilitation of existing public  
 30 elementary and secondary schools and, in accordance with regulations adopted by the  
 31 department, determine and approve the extent of eligibility for state aid of a school

1 construction or major maintenance project; for the purposes of this paragraph, "plans"  
 2 include educational specifications, schematic designs, projected energy consumption  
 3 and costs, and final contract documents;

4 (12) provide educational opportunities in the areas of vocational  
 5 education and training, and basic education to individuals over 16 years of age who  
 6 are no longer attending school; the department may consult with businesses and labor  
 7 unions to develop a program to prepare students for apprenticeships or internships that  
 8 will lead to employment opportunities;

9 (13) administer the grants awarded under AS 14.11;

10 (14) establish, in coordination with the Department of Public Safety, a  
 11 school bus driver training course;

12 (15) require the reporting of information relating to school disciplinary  
 13 and safety programs under AS 14.33.120 and of incidents of disruptive or violent  
 14 behavior;

15 (16) establish by regulation criteria, based on low student performance,  
 16 under which the department may intervene in a school district to improve instructional  
 17 practices, as described in AS 14.07.030(a)(14) or (15); the regulations must include

18 (A) a notice provision that alerts the district to the deficiencies  
 19 and the instructional practice changes proposed by the department;

20 (B) an end date for departmental intervention, as described in  
 21 AS 14.07.030(a)(14)(A) and (B) and (15), after the district demonstrates three  
 22 consecutive years of improvement consisting of not less than two percent  
 23 increases in student proficiency on standards-based assessments in language  
 24 arts and mathematics, as provided in AS 14.03.123(f)(1)(A); and

25 (C) a process for districts to petition the department for  
 26 continuing or discontinuing the department's intervention;

27 (17) notify the legislative committees having jurisdiction over  
 28 education before intervening in a school district under AS 14.07.030(a)(14) or  
 29 redirecting public school funding under AS 14.07.030(a)(15);

30 **(18) establish a literacy program to provide direct support for and**  
 31 **intervention in the reading intervention programs of participating schools as**

described in AS 14.30.765 and 14.30.770.

\* **Sec. 8.** AS 14.07.020(c) is amended to read:

(c) In this section, **"early education program"** ["PRE-ELEMENTARY SCHOOL"] means a **program** [SCHOOL] for children ages three through five years if the **program's** [SCHOOL'S] primary function is educational.

\* **Sec. 9.** AS 14.07.050 is amended to read:

**Sec. 14.07.050. Selection of textbooks.** Textbooks for use in the public schools of the state, including a district offered statewide correspondence study program, shall be selected by district boards for district schools. Nothing in this section precludes

**(1) a correspondence study student, or the parent or guardian of a correspondence study student, from privately obtaining or using textbooks or curriculum material not provided by the school district;**

**(2) the department from selecting and purchasing supplementary reading textbooks and materials for school districts in connection with reading intervention services provided under AS 14.30.765 and 14.30.770.**

\* **Sec. 10.** AS 14.07.165(a) is amended to read:

(a) The board shall adopt

(1) statewide goals and require each governing body to adopt written goals that are consistent with local needs;

(2) regulations regarding the application for and award of grants under AS 14.03.125;

(3) regulations implementing provisions of AS 14.11.014(b);

(4) regulations requiring approval by the board before a charter school, state boarding school, or a public school may provide domiciliary services;

(5) **regulations establishing standards for an early education program provided by a school district for children who are four and five years of age; the regulations must include**

**(A) standards for a**

**(i) half-day program consisting of not less than two and one-half hours;**



(ii) full-day program consisting of six hours; and

(iii) locally designed, evidence-based program that is less than half a day that meets early education program standards;

(B) a requirement that a teacher in charge of a program hold a valid teacher certificate issued under AS 14.20 and

(i) have satisfactorily completed a minimum of six credit hours in early childhood education or completes the minimum credit hours within one year of the date the teacher's employment with the early education program begins; or

(ii) have five or more years of experience teaching kindergarten or another early education program;

(C) developmentally appropriate objectives for children four and five years of age rather than academic standards appropriate for older children; the objectives must allow school districts to adapt the content of an early education program to be culturally appropriate to local communities; and

(D) accommodations for the needs of all early education children and their families regardless of socioeconomic circumstances

[REPEALED].

\* **Sec. 11.** AS 14.17.500 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

(d) Except as provided in AS 14.17.905(d), a student in an early education program approved by the department under AS 14.07.020(a)(8) is counted as one-half of a full-time equivalent student.

\* **Sec. 12.** AS 14.17.905(a) is amended to read:

(a) For purposes of this chapter, the determination of the number of schools in a district is subject to the following:

(1) a community with an ADM of at least 10, but not more than 100, shall be counted as one school;

(2) a community with an ADM of at least 101, but not more than 425, shall be counted as

(A) one elementary school, which includes those students in

grades kindergarten through six, and, except as provided in (d) of this section, in an early education program provided by a school district and approved by the department under AS 14.07.020(a)(8); and

(B) one secondary school, which includes students in grades seven through 12;

(3) in a community with an ADM of greater than 425, each facility that is administered as a separate school shall be counted as one school, except that each alternative school with an ADM of less than 175 shall be counted as a part of the school in the district with the highest ADM.

\* **Sec. 13.** AS 14.17.905 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

(d) A school district may not include in the average daily membership of a school students who are four and five years of age if the students are enrolled in an early education program that receives state or federal funding other than funding under this chapter.

\* **Sec. 14.** AS 14.30 is amended by adding new sections to read:

#### **Article 15. Reading Intervention Programs.**

**Sec. 14.30.760. Statewide assessment.** (a) To implement the district reading intervention services established under AS 14.30.765, the department shall

(1) adopt a statewide screening or assessment tool to administer to students in grades kindergarten through three to identify students with reading deficiencies, including students with characteristics of dyslexia; the screening or assessment tool must evaluate

(A) phonic awareness, letter naming fluency, letter sound fluency, and letter word sound fluency of students in kindergarten;

(B) letter word sound fluency and oral reading fluency of students in grade one;

(C) vocabulary and oral reading fluency of students in grades two and three;

(2) support teachers of grades kindergarten through three by

(A) administering the statewide screening or assessment tool three times each school year, once in the fall, once in the winter, and once in

the spring, to all students in grades kindergarten through three, with the exception of students who demonstrate sufficient reading skills on the first screening or assessment of the school year;

(B) providing methods to monitor student progress;

(C) providing targeted instruction based on student needs as determined by the results of the screening or assessment tool; and

(D) providing additional assistance as determined by the department;

(3) provide training to school district staff related to using the results of the statewide screening or assessment tool and understanding the science of reading, including explicit and systematic instruction in phonological awareness, alphabetic principle, decoding, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and building content knowledge.

(b) In adopting a statewide screening or assessment tool under (a)(1) of this section, the department shall consider the following factors:

(1) the amount of time needed to administer the screening or assessment, with the intention of minimizing effects on instructional time;

(2) the time frame for reporting screening or assessment results to teachers, administrators, and parents or guardians; and

(3) the integration of the screening or assessment with student instruction and department support.

**Sec. 14.30.765. District reading intervention services.** (a) Each school district shall offer intensive reading intervention services to students in grades kindergarten through three who exhibit a reading deficiency to assist students in achieving reading proficiency at or above grade level by the end of grade three. The district shall provide the intensive reading intervention services in addition to the core reading instruction that is provided to all students in the general education classroom. The intensive reading intervention services must

(1) be provided by a district reading teacher to all students in grades kindergarten through three who are determined to have a reading deficiency based on the statewide screening or assessment tool adopted under AS 14.30.760(a)(1);

1 (2) provide explicit and systematic instruction in phonological  
2 awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension, as necessary;

3 (3) use reading instruction methods that are based on scientific  
4 research and have proven results in accelerating student reading achievement within a  
5 single school year;

6 (4) include instruction with detailed explanations, extensive  
7 opportunities for guided practice, and opportunities for error correction and feedback;

8 (5) incorporate daily targeted small group reading instruction based on  
9 student needs, either in person or online;

10 (6) monitor the reading progress of each student's reading skills  
11 throughout the school year and adjust instruction according to student needs;

12 (7) be implemented during regular school hours through any available  
13 method, including in person or through online delivery by teachers or specialty  
14 reading coaches;

15 (8) be implemented outside of regular school hours for at least 70  
16 hours during the school year for a student who scores at the lowest achievement level  
17 on the statewide screening or assessment; and

18 (9) be reviewed based on a department-approved response to  
19 intervention or multi-tiered system support models, addressing additional support and  
20 services needed to remedy identified needs.

21 (b) In addition to the reading intervention services provided under (a) of this  
22 section, a school district shall provide an individual reading improvement plan for  
23 each student in grades kindergarten through three who is determined to have a reading  
24 deficiency based on the statewide screening or assessment. An individual reading  
25 improvement plan developed under this section must

26 (1) be implemented not later than 30 days after identification of the  
27 reading deficiency;

28 (2) be created by the student's reading teacher in consultation with the  
29 school principal, the student's parents or guardians, and other pertinent district staff;

30 (3) describe the research-based reading intervention services the  
31 student will receive to achieve and demonstrate sufficient reading skills;

(4) provide reading intervention services outside of regular school hours for a student who scores at the lowest achievement level on the statewide screening or assessment consistent with (a)(8) of this section; and

(5) include a process for monitoring progress and adjusting the plan based on student needs.

(c) If at any time during the school year a student in grades kindergarten through three demonstrates a reading deficiency, the district or school shall notify the student's parents or guardians in writing. The district or school shall provide the student's parents or guardians with updates on the student's progress every two weeks after the initial written notification. The initial written notification must

(1) be provided to the student's parents or guardians not later than 15 days after identification of the reading deficiency;

(2) state that the district identified the student as having a reading deficiency and that a reading improvement plan will be developed under (b) of this section;

(3) describe current services that the district is providing to the student;

(4) describe the proposed research-based reading interventions and supplemental instructional services and supports that the district will provide to the student to improve the identified area of reading deficiency;

(5) explain that the district or school will inform the parents or guardians in writing of the student's progress toward grade level reading at least every two weeks;

(6) identify strategies for the parents or guardians to use at home to help the student succeed in reading;

(7) explain that if the student has a reading deficiency at the end of the school year, unless the student receives an exemption under (f) of this section, the student may be prevented from progressing to the next grade level under (d) of this section; and

(8) explain that a student in grade three should demonstrate sufficient reading skills to progress to grade four under (e) of this section, unless the student receives an exemption under (f) of this section.

1 (d) If, not later than 45 days before the end of the school year, a teacher  
2 determines that a student in grades kindergarten through three has a reading  
3 deficiency, the student's teacher and other pertinent district staff shall meet with the  
4 student's parents or guardians to determine whether the student will be able to  
5 maintain adequate academic progress at the next grade level and discuss delayed grade  
6 level progression as an intervention strategy. School staff shall work with the parents  
7 or guardians to schedule a date, time, and place for the meeting and, if no parent or  
8 guardian attends the meeting, the teacher and school staff shall determine grade level  
9 progression.

10 (e) A student in grade three should demonstrate sufficient reading skills to  
11 progress to grade four. A student demonstrates sufficient reading skills for progression  
12 by

13 (1) scoring above the lowest achievement level on the statewide  
14 screening or assessment;

15 (2) achieving an acceptable score on an alternative standardized  
16 reading assessment as determined and approved by the state Board of Education and  
17 Early Development; or

18 (3) demonstrating mastery of reading standards through a student  
19 reading portfolio based on criteria established by the department.

20 (f) A school board may exempt a student from delayed grade level progression  
21 for good cause. A good cause exemption is limited to

22 (1) a student with a disability whose individualized education plan  
23 under AS 14.30.278 exempts the student from participation in the statewide screening  
24 or assessment;

25 (2) a student with a disability who participates in the statewide  
26 screening or assessment and has an individualized education plan under AS 14.30.278  
27 or a plan under 29 U.S.C. 794 that reflects that the student has received intensive  
28 reading intervention services for two years or more but still demonstrates a reading  
29 deficiency and was previously retained in kindergarten, grade one, grade two, or grade  
30 three;

31 (3) a student who has received intensive reading intervention services

1 for two or more years but still demonstrates a reading deficiency and who was  
 2 previously retained in kindergarten, grade one, grade two, or grade three; or

3 (4) a student whose primary language is other than English and who  
 4 has had less than two years of instruction in an English language learning program.

5 (g) A student's parents or guardians may request that the student receive a  
 6 good cause exemption under (f) of this section by submitting documentation to the  
 7 principal of the school in which the student is enrolled showing that an exemption is  
 8 appropriate. If the principal determines that the student meets one of the exemptions  
 9 under (f) of this section, the principal shall recommend to the school board in writing  
 10 that the school board grant the student a good cause exemption. The school board shall  
 11 accept or reject the principal's recommendation in writing and provide notice of its  
 12 decision to the student's parents or guardians and the principal.

13 (h) If a student is a candidate for delayed grade level progression, the district  
 14 or school in which the student is enrolled shall provide written notification to the  
 15 student's parents or guardians not later than 120 days before the end of the school year.

16 (i) If a student in grade three does not demonstrate sufficient reading skills for  
 17 progression to grade four under (e) of this section, the district or school in which the  
 18 student is enrolled shall provide written notification to the student's parents or  
 19 guardians not later than 30 days before the end of the school year. The written  
 20 notification must

21 (1) state that the student did not demonstrate sufficient reading skills to  
 22 progress to grade four;

23 (2) explain the implementation of intervention or progression  
 24 strategies;

25 (3) describe the current services being provided to the student; and

26 (4) if the student's parents or guardians requested a good cause  
 27 exemption under (f) of this section and the school board rejected the request, include a  
 28 statement that the request for a good cause exemption was rejected and a copy of the  
 29 written notification the school board provided the parents or guardians under (g) of  
 30 this section.

31 (j) For a student who does not progress to the next grade level under (d) or (e)

1 of this section, or who progresses to the next grade level with a good cause exemption  
 2 under (f) of this section, the district in which the student is enrolled shall

3 (1) review the student's individual reading improvement plan;

4 (2) provide intensive reading intervention services to improve the area  
 5 of reading deficiency using effective instructional strategies to accelerate student  
 6 progress;

7 (3) provide additional services and support to improve the student's  
 8 identified area of reading deficiency, including

9 (A) a transitional instructional setting that is designed to  
 10 produce learning gains;

11 (B) supplemental tutoring offered by a person with specialized  
 12 reading training;

13 (C) an increase in time dedicated to the reading instruction  
 14 methods described in (a)(3) - (5) of this section, including more extensive  
 15 opportunities for guided practice and error correction and feedback;

16 (4) a plan for reading at home outlined in an agreement with the  
 17 parents or guardians, including parent participation in training workshops and regular  
 18 parent-guided home reading activities.

19 (k) A district shall establish intensive acceleration classes for students retained  
 20 in grade three who were previously retained in kindergarten, grade one, or grade two.  
 21 The intensive acceleration classes must provide reading instruction and intervention  
 22 for the majority of student contact time each day and have a reduced teacher-to-  
 23 student ratio.

24 (l) In this section, "reading teacher" means a teacher certificated under  
 25 AS 14.20 who has demonstrated an effectiveness at instructing students to read at or  
 26 above grade level through student reading performance data and teacher performance  
 27 evaluations and who meets the requirements established by the state Board of  
 28 Education and Early Development in regulation.

29 **Sec. 14.30.770. Department literacy program.** (a) The department shall  
 30 establish a literacy program to provide direct support for and intervention in intensive  
 31 reading intervention services of not more than 10 participating schools at a time. State



1 funding provided to participating schools for implementation of the literacy program is  
 2 in addition to the amount of funding provided under AS 14.17. In conducting the  
 3 program, the department shall

4 (1) use the accountability system established in AS 14.03.123 to  
 5 identify low performing schools;

6 (2) establish an application process for school districts to apply to  
 7 participate in the program;

8 (3) select low performing schools from the schools that apply to  
 9 participate in the program;

10 (4) employ and assign a reading specialist for each school selected to  
 11 direct the implementation of the intensive reading intervention services established  
 12 under AS 14.30.765 by

13 (A) modeling effective instructional strategies for teachers by  
 14 working regularly with students as a class, in small groups, or individually;

15 (B) coaching and mentoring teachers and staff in reading  
 16 instruction with an emphasis on prioritizing time in a manner that has the  
 17 greatest positive effects on student achievement;

18 (C) training teachers in data analysis and using data to  
 19 differentiate instruction;

20 (D) leading and supporting reading leadership teams; and

21 (E) reporting on school and student performance to the  
 22 department;

23 (5) establish a reporting process for each reading specialist and support  
 24 reading specialist to submit updates to the department on implementation of the  
 25 program;

26 (6) work with reading specialists to create specific improvement goals  
 27 for each school selected, including measures of interim progress;

28 (7) select and purchase additional reading material for each school  
 29 selected to supplement the intensive reading intervention services;

30 (8) pay travel and associated costs for a reading specialist or support  
 31 reading specialist to attend relevant training sessions identified by or hosted by the

1 department;

2 (9) periodically review staff development programs for their  
3 effectiveness in developing reading skills and, after consultation with school districts  
4 and experts, recommend to the board for approval staff development programs that

5 (A) have been proven to assess and accelerate student progress  
6 toward reaching reading competency;

7 (B) provide explicit and systematic skill development in the  
8 areas of phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and  
9 comprehension;

10 (C) are scientifically based and reliable;

11 (D) provide initial and ongoing analysis of student progress  
12 toward reaching reading competency; and

13 (E) include texts on core academic content to assist students in  
14 maintaining or meeting grade-appropriate proficiency in academic subjects in  
15 addition to reading.

16 (b) The department may employ and assign a support reading specialist for  
17 each school selected to participate in the program, as necessary, to support the reading  
18 specialist assigned under (a)(4) of this section or serve as a reading specialist for a  
19 school's early education program.

20 (c) A school selected to participate in the literacy program established under  
21 this section shall

22 (1) ensure that a reading specialist assigned to the school is not  
23 required to perform functions that divert from the duties the department has assigned  
24 to the reading specialist;

25 (2) coordinate with the reading specialist or specialists to redesign the  
26 school's daily schedule to dedicate time to literacy program activities, including  
27 intensive reading intervention services identified in a written agreement between the  
28 school and the department;

29 (3) present on the literacy program established under this section and  
30 the intensive reading intervention services established under AS 14.30.765 at a public  
31 meeting; the presentation must include

1 (A) the data the department used to identify the school as  
2 eligible for the literacy program;

3 (B) a detailed overview of the literacy program and intensive  
4 reading intervention services;

5 (C) a timeline for implementing the intensive reading  
6 intervention services and meeting literacy improvement goals; and

7 (D) the implications of the program for students, families, and  
8 educators;

9 (4) provide notice of the public meeting required under (3) of this  
10 subsection to the parents or guardians of each student at least seven days before the  
11 date of the meeting;

12 (5) present an annual update on the school's implementation of the  
13 literacy program and intensive reading intervention services at a public meeting with  
14 notice provided to the parents or guardians of each student at least seven days before  
15 the date of the meeting;

16 (6) create partnerships between the school, the families of students,  
17 and the community that focus on promoting literacy and increasing the amount of time  
18 that students spend reading.

19 (d) The department shall publish on the department's Internet website and  
20 make available to the public

21 (1) a completed application from each school selected to participate in  
22 the literacy program;

23 (2) the literacy program and intensive reading intervention services  
24 implemented by each school selected to participate; and

25 (3) a data analysis conducted by an independent contractor of the  
26 success of the literacy program and intensive reading intervention services.

27 (e) In this section, "reading specialist" means a teacher certificated under  
28 AS 14.20 who is employed and funded by the department and who meets the  
29 requirements established by the state Board of Education and Early Development in  
30 regulation.

31 **Sec. 14.30.775. Definition.** In AS 14.30.760 - 14.30.775, "district" has the

1 meaning given in AS 14.17.990.

2 \* **Sec. 15.** AS 47.17.290(12) is amended to read:

3 (12) "organization" means a group or entity that provides care and  
 4 supervision for compensation to a child not related to the caregiver, and includes a  
 5 child care facility, pre-elementary school, early education program, head start  
 6 center, child foster home, residential child care facility, recreation program, children's  
 7 camp, and children's club;

8 \* **Sec. 16.** AS 14.03.135 is repealed July 1, 2031.

9 \* **Sec. 17.** The uncoded law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to  
 10 read:

11 TRANSITION. The Department of Education and Early Development shall conduct  
 12 the performance ranking of all districts in the state required under AS 14.03.135(c), added by  
 13 sec. 6 of this Act, on or before August 1, 2020.

14 \* **Sec. 18.** The uncoded law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to  
 15 read:

16 REPORT BY COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION AND EARLY  
 17 DEVELOPMENT. Not later than 30 days after the effective date of this Act, the  
 18 commissioner of education and early development shall submit a report to the state Board of  
 19 Education and Early Development describing the progress made to implement this Act.

20 \* **Sec. 19.** This Act takes effect July 1, 2020.