

1 **Section 1.** Alaska's Right to Read for All and Dyslexia Act

2 **Section 2.**

3 (A) It is the intent of the Legislature to create the Alaska Right to Read Act.

4 (B) Findings

5 (1) approximately 36,300 students out of 63,000 PEAKS reading test takers in
6 grades 3 to 9 in the state did not meet Alaska English Language Arts standards
7 in 2018, and reading proficiency scores on the National Assessment of
8 Educational Progress for students in the state were low and stagnant from 2003
9 through 2017;

10 (2) results of student assessments in (B) (1) indicate that reading instruction and
11 reading proficiency for students in the state should be improved;

12 (3) the scientific consensus is that, when learning to read, typical and atypical
13 learners have overlapping instructional needs, including the need for highly
14 knowledgeable and skilled reading teachers to improve reading proficiency
15 outcomes;

16 (4) dyslexia, the most common specific learning disability, affects between three
17 and 17 percent of the student population and accounts for approximately 80
18 percent of all specific learning disabilities;

19 (5) The public school system parents and other caregivers are responsible for
20 ensuring that their children learn to read through the public school system or
21 other means of instruction; and

22 (6) the residents of this state also hold the legislature, the governor, and the state
23 Board of Education and Early Development accountable for student reading
24 proficiency outcomes and for leading reforms of the state's public education
25 system.

26 (C) Intent

(1) The Performance Evaluation for Alaska's Schools (PEAKS) will report a Standalone Reading Proficiency Score derived from the PEAKS English Language Arts assessment as a standalone score and designed to map onto the National Assessment of Educational Progress average 4th grade reading scores within $\pm 10\%$.

(2) 95-98% of Alaskan students will be reading proficient on the newly designed [Section 2.\(C \)](#)(1) Stand alone Reading Proficiency Score or on a nationally normed reading assessment by entry into grade 4.

(3) That each Teacher of Reading is highly knowledgeable and skilled in producing student reading proficiency; that district school board policies facilitate principals and superintendents who knowledgeably support such reading proficiency; and that each student and his or her parent be periodically informed of that student's academic progress.

(4) That the University of Alaska and any provider located in Alaska of an alternative route to teacher licensing authorized by the State of Alaska, shall ensure that all teacher education programs include information on the identification of students with reading difficulties, at risk for dyslexia or related disorders; that reading professors are highly knowledge and skilled at passing their knowledge onto pre-service teachers, principals, and superintendents thus producing student reading proficiency.

(5) Requires all State funded University Schools of Education programs K-6 and any provider located in Alaska of an alternative route to teacher licensing authorized by the State of Alaska to be certified by a national certifying body that uses scientific reading research standards that are:

The methods supported by research are explicit, systematic, cumulative, and integrate listening, speaking, reading, and writing. They are also multilinguistic, as they directly teach the structure of language at all levels, including the speech sound system (phonology), the writing system (orthography), the structure of sentences (syntax), the meaningful parts of

words (morphology), word and phrase meanings (semantics), and the organization of spoken and written discourse. The strategies emphasize planning, organization, attention to task, critical thinking, and self-management.

(6) To create an Institution of Reading Excellence (IRE) responsible for Section (2)(B-D) in coordination with the Establish of an Enhancement and Acceleration Development (READ) Initiative.

(7) That each student's progression into fourth grade be determined, in part, upon proficiency in reading; that district school board policies facilitate such proficiency; and that each student and his or her parent be periodically informed of that student's academic progress.

Section 3. Definitions

(A) "dyslexia" means a learning disability that is neurobiological in origin and is characterized by difficulties with accurate or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities;

(B) "relevant educational staff" includes school psychologists, special education teachers, other teachers, principals, and superintendents;

(C) "task force" means the Legislative Task Force on Reading Proficiency and Dyslexia.

(D) "Dyslexia interventionist" means a school district or public-school employee *trained in a dyslexia program*, such as a:

(1) Dyslexia therapist;

(2) Dyslexia specialist;

(3) Reading interventionist;

(4) Certified teacher; or

(5) Tutor or paraprofessional working under the supervision of a certified teacher;

(E) "Dyslexia program" means explicit, direct instruction that is:

(1) Systematic, sequential, and cumulative and follows a logical plans of presenting the alphabetic principle that targets the specific needs of the student without presuming prior skills of knowledge of the student;

(2) Systematic, multisensory, and research-based;

(3) Offered in a small group setting to teach students the components of reading instruction, including without limitation:

(i) Phonemic awareness to enable a student to detect, segment, blend, and manipulate sounds in spoken language;

(ii) Graphophonemic knowledge for teaching the letter-sound plan of English;

(iii) The structure of the English language that includes morphology, semantics, syntax, and pragmatics;

(iv) Linguistic instruction directed toward proficiency and fluency with the patterns of language so that words and sentences are carriers of meaning; and

(v) Strategies that students use for decoding, encoding, word recognition, fluency, and comprehension; and

(4)(i) Delivered with fidelity.

(ii) "Fidelity" means the intervention is done as the author of the program intended.

(F) "Dyslexia specialist" means a professional at each education service cooperative or school district who has expertise and is working towards an endorsement or certification in providing training for:

(i) Phonological and phonemic awareness;

(ii) Sound and symbol relationships;

(iii) Alphabet knowledge;

1 (iv) Decoding skills;

2 (v) Rapid naming skills; and

3 (vi) Encoding skills.

4 (1) A dyslexia specialist shall be fluent in the Response to Intervention (RTI)
5 process and provide training in:

6 (i) administering screenings, analyzing and interpreting screening data,
7 and determining appropriate interventions that are systematic,
8 multisensory, and evidence-based;

9 (G) "Dyslexia therapist" means a professional who has completed training and obtained
10 certification in dyslexia therapy from a dyslexia therapy training program defined by the
11 Department of Education; and

12 (H) "Dyslexia therapy" means an appropriate specialized reading instructional program
13 specifically designed for use in a dyslexia program that is:

14 (1) delivered by a dyslexia interventionist;

15 (H) "Body of evidence" means a collection of information about a student's academic
16 performance which, when considered in its entirety, documents the level of a student's
17 academic performance. A body of evidence, at a minimum, shall include scores on
18 formative or interim assessments and work that a student independently produces in a
19 classroom, including but not limited to the school readiness assessments. A body of
20 evidence may include scores on summative assessments.

21 (I) "District charter school" means a charter school authorized by a school district
22 pursuant to.....

23 (J) "Department" means Alaska Department of Early Education and Development
24 (DEED)

25 (K) Screening, diagnostic, and classroom-based instructional reading assessments

1 i) In general The term “screening, diagnostic, and classroom-based
2 instructional reading assessments” means—

- 3 (a) screening reading assessments;
- 4 (b) diagnostic reading assessments; and
- 5 (c) classroom-based instructional reading assessments.

6 ii) Screening reading assessment The term “screening reading assessment”
7 means an assessment that is—

- 8 (a) valid, reliable, and based on scientifically based reading research;
9 and
- 10 (b) used by classroom teachers, school psychologists, and other
11 appropriate educators
- 12 (c) brief procedure designed as a first step in identifying children who
13 may be at high risk for delayed development or academic failure and in
14 need of further diagnosis of their need for special services or additional

15 iii) Diagnostic reading assessment The term “diagnostic reading assessment”
16 means an assessment that is—

- 17 (a) valid, reliable, and based on scientifically based reading research;
18 and
- 19 (b) used by classroom teachers, school psychologists, and other
20 appropriate educators for the purpose of—
 - 21 1. identifying a child’s specific areas of strengths and
22 weaknesses;
 - 23 2. determining any difficulties that a child may have in learning
24 to read and the potential cause of such difficulties; and
 - 25 3. helping to determine possible reading intervention strategies
26 and related special needs.

1 (iv) Classroom-based instructional reading assessment The term “classroom-
2 based instructional reading assessment” means an assessment that—

3 (a) evaluates children’s learning based on systematic observations by
4 teachers of children performing academic tasks that are part of their daily
5 classroom experience; and

6 (b) is used to improve instruction in reading, including classroom
7 instruction.

8 (c) used by classroom teachers, school psychologists, and other
9 appropriate educators

10 (K) “Evidence based” means based on reliable, trustworthy, and valid evidence that
11 has demonstrated a record of success in adequately increasing students' reading
12 competency in the areas of:

13 (a) Phonological and phonemic awareness including:

14 (1) in kindergarten rhyme, alliteration, syllables, first sound;

15 (2) in kindergarten –middle first grade phoneme blending and
16 segmentation; and,

17 (3) middle first grade onward phoneme addition, deletion, and
18 substitution,

19 (b) rapid automatic naming,

20 (c) phonics,

21 (d) vocabulary development,

22 (e) reading fluency, including oral reading fluency skills,

23 (f) and reading comprehension.

24 (L) “Alphabetic Principle” Symbol to sound relationships. A writing system whose
25 symbols (graphemes) represent the speech sounds (phonemes) of the language.

(M) "Phonemic awareness" refers to the ability to focus on and manipulate phonemes in spoken words. It includes phoneme isolation, identity, segmentation, blending, manipulation of phonemes by addition, deletion, and substitution.

(N) "rapid automatic naming" Rapid naming is the ability to quickly retrieve the name of a letter, number, object, word, picture, etc., from long term memory. (Alaska Dyslexia Handbook)

(O) "phonics" is association of letters with the phonemes they spell.

(P) "decode" means reading by breaking apart the component sounds of a word; blending of sounds to make a word

(Q) "vocabulary" the knowledge of words and word meanings, including definitions, morphemic analysis, and contextual analysis.

(R) "reading fluency including oral fluency reading skills" Instant and effortless access to all, or almost all, words read (automatically recognized sight vocabulary). Read with sufficient accuracy & rate to support comprehension. : The effortless reading of text with adequate rate, accuracy, and expression to support comprehension

(S) "reading comprehension" means extracting and constructing meaning from text, and the understanding of what is read aloud or silently.

13) "Local education provider" means a school district, a board of cooperative services, a district charter school.

14) "Parent" means a student's biological or adoptive parent, stepparent, foster parent, or legal guardian.

The singular use of "parent" includes the plural and local education providers shall, to the extent practicable, involve both of a student's parents as defined in this subsection (8) in implementing the provisions of this part 12.

15) "Reading competency" means a student meets the grade level expectations in reading adopted by the state board.

16) ~~"Reading Competency Plan" means an instruction and intervention plan created pursuant to section XXX to remediate a student's significant reading deficiency.~~

17) "Response to instruction and intervention framework" means a systemic preventive approach that addresses the academic and social-emotional needs of all students at the universal, targeted, and intensive levels. Through the response to instruction and intervention framework, a teacher provides high-quality, scientifically based reading instruction and intervention that is matched to student assessed needs; uses a method of monitoring progress frequently to inform decisions about instruction and goals; and applies the students response data to important educational decisions.

18) "School district" means a school district, other than a local college district, organized and existing pursuant to law.

19) "Scientifically based reading research" The term "scientifically based reading research" means research that—applies rigorous, systematic, and objective procedures to obtain valid knowledge relevant to reading development, reading instruction, and reading difficulties; and includes research that—

i) employs systematic, empirical methods that draw on observation or experiment;

ii) involves rigorous data analyses that are adequate to test the stated hypotheses and justify the general conclusions drawn;

iii) relies on measurements or observational methods that provide valid data across evaluators and observers and across multiple measurements and observations; and

iv) has been accepted by a peer-reviewed journal or approved by a panel of independent experts through a comparably rigorous, objective, and scientific review

20) "Teacher Diagnosis" An educational diagnosis about a student's learning which is derived through a deliberate, systematic process of data collection and analysis that

provides the basis for prescriptive instruction for which the teacher is accountable. It is expressed concisely and includes the etiology of the diagnosis when known.

21) "Significant reading deficiency" means that a student does not meet the minimum skill levels for reading competency in the areas of phonemic awareness including in kindergarten rhyme, alliteration, syllables, first sound, kindergarten –middle first grade phoneme blending and segmentation, and middle first grade onward phoneme addition, deletion, and substitution, rapid automatic naming, phonics, vocabulary development, reading fluency, including oral fluency reading skills, or reading comprehension established by the state board pursuant to section xxx for the student's grade level.

22) "Teacher" means the educator who is the main instructor for a class of students or an educator who provides specific reading instruction to selected students.

Section 4.

(A) This Alaska Right to Read Act being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health and safety, an emergency is declared to exist, and this Alaska Right to Read Act takes effect on its passage.

(B) To create an Institution of Reading Excellence (IRE) responsible for [Section](#) (2)(B-D) in coordination with the Establish of a Reading Enhancement and Acceleration Development (READ) Initiative.

(C) The Intent of Section 4. is to:

Section 4. (C)(1) train and retrain excellent University of Alaska reading professors, principals, superintendents, K-3rd grade teachers, special education teachers, paraprofessionals, volunteers, and students in Alaskan K-12 classrooms who may become future teachers in Alaska, in evidenced-based universal and diagnostic reading screening and evidenced-based reading instruction that is supported by the body of reading science from the National Institutes of Health or equivalent research centers.

1 (2) The IRE will be phased in by training principals, superintendents,
2 paraprofessionals, district of Alaska School Board Members, volunteers, and
3 students in Alaskan 7-12 grade classrooms who may become future teachers in
4 Alaska (cohort 1), in the first year followed by K-3rd grade teachers, Special
5 Education Teachers, and University of Alaska reading professors (cohort 2) in
6 the second year.

7 (i) The IRE will create an intensive 8 week full time summer training
8 academy to start training cohort 1 participants in June 2020;

9 (ii) The training shall be based on the Section 2 (C);

10 (iii) Online tools that conform to [Section](#) 4.(C)(6) may be utilized if efficient
11 for content delivery and used as practicums with reading deficient
12 students in K-3; however, they may not take the place of practicums
13 designed to demonstrate skill in reading instruction.

14 (iv) A stand alone 100 item pre and post test reading competency exam,
15 equivalent to the MTEL90, will be administered to cohort 1 participants;

16 (v) Cohort 1 participants who pass the MTEL90 pre-test with a 95% score
17 will be exempt from the training.

18 (vi) The 8 week summer training will consist of a minimum of 30 hours of
19 lecture and a maximum of 60 hours of lecture with the remainder being
20 practicum hours with students identified by the Establish of a Reading
21 Enhancement and Acceleration Development (READ) Initiative pursuant
22 to Section 3. (B) and any Alaskan k-3 students whose parents desire them
23 to attend.

24 (2) The IRE will report the student outcomes; pre and post test outcomes of this
25 cohort; costs; participant surveys; and other pertinent information to the Alaska
26 Governor, Legislature; and Alaska Department of Education & Early
27 Development (DEED) no later than December 10 of 2020.

1 (ii) The IRE will create an intensive 10 week summer training academy to
2 start training cohort 2 participants in June 2021.

3 (a) The training shall cover evidenced-based universal and
4 diagnostic reading screening and evidenced-based reading
5 instruction that is supported by the body of reading science from
6 the National Institutes of Health or equivalent research centers.

7 (b) Establishes a dyslexia teacher training pilot to train higher
8 education faculty to teach multisensory structure reading education
9 for students with dyslexia to teacher candidates. Other purposes
10 are to demonstrate and evaluate the effectiveness of having trained
11 teachers who can provide early reading assistance programs for
12 children with risk factors and evaluate whether the early assistance
13 programs can reduce future special education costs. An additional
14 goal is to create a replicable model that can be followed by other
15 higher education institutions. Requires Regents to promulgate
16 rules. The program will operate by contract with a nonprofit
17 education center that is certified as a multisensory structured
18 language training institute.

19 (b) The 10 week full time summer training will consist of 80 hours of
20 lecture with the remainder being practicum hours with students
21 identified by the Establish of a Reading Enhancement and
22 Acceleration Development (READ) Initiative pursuant to [Section 3](#).

23 (B).

24 (c) The training shall be based on the Section 2 (C);

25 (c) Online tools that conform to [Section 4.\(C\)\(6\)](#) may be utilized if
26 efficient for content delivery and *shall not* be used in the practicum
27 hours;

(d) A stand alone 100 item pre and post test reading competency exam, equivalent to the MTEL90, will be administered to cohort 2 participants;

(f) The IRE will track and report data on the effectiveness of its programs and report the student outcomes; pre and post test outcomes; costs; participant surveys; and other pertinent information to the Alaska Governor, Legislature; and Department of Early Education DEED no later than December 10 of 2020.

Section 5.

(A) Child Find

*** Sec. 2143. AS 14.30.274 is repealed.**

*** Sec. 2144. AS 14 is amended by adding a new section to read:**

AS 14.30.275 IDENTIFICATION OF EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN.

(a) All districts shall establish and implement written program procedures for identifying all exceptional children who reside within the district and who need special education and related or support services.

(b) The procedures established under (a) of this section must include

(1) annual screening of all children, which may be in cooperation with other agencies, to include an assessment of not less than the child's

(A) health;

(B) vision;

(C) hearing;

(D) general development or general basic skills;

(E) primary language and culture; and

(F) daily living skills in home and community obtained through parental input;

(G) Pre-literacy language processing skill screening in phonological processing related to reading acquisition, screening in phonemic awareness and rapid automatized naming at school entry (ages 4, 5,) and at age 6 letter sound knowledge.

(1) Students at age 6 who have deficits, despite identification and intervention at age 4/5 in these phonological processes are to be referred for full evaluation for reading disability, dyslexia.

(2) mandatory referral for evaluation of children suspected, upon screening, to be exceptional children;

Section 6

(A) Dyslexia Specific Identification

It is the ultimate goal of the Legislature that every student read at or above grade level. Any student who exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading, based upon nationally-normed reading screeners conducted under Child Find in [Section 5](#) or at any time in kindergarten, grade 1, grade 2, or grade 3, or through teacher observations at any grade, must be given intensive reading instruction immediately following the identification of the reading deficiency.

(a) A school district shall screen each student in kindergarten through grade two (K-2) and others required by the Department of Education rule using the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) or an equivalent screener.

(1) The screening of students shall be performed with fidelity as specified in its standard procedures by the publisher, which may be online or via technology, and include without limitation:

- (i) Phonological and phonemic awareness with manipulation at the syllable, onset-rime, and phoneme levels;
- (ii) Sound symbol recognition;
- (iii) Alphabet knowledge;
- (iv) Decoding skills;
- (v) Rapid naming skills; and
- (vi) Encoding skills.

(3) If the screener under subdivision [Section 5.\(A\)\(2\)](#) of this section shows that a student is at risk, or at some risk, then a level I dyslexia screener shall be administered.

(4) The level I dyslexia screening of a student shall be performed with fidelity and include the components listed under subdivision [Section 5.\(A\)\(2\)](#) of this section.

(5) The level II dyslexia screener includes norm-referenced, diagnostic assessments designed to measure the underlying cause, characteristics, and outcomes should be administered to identify the characteristics of dyslexia. The specific skills to be tested include phonological awareness, rapid naming, word reading, decoding, fluency, spelling, and reading comprehension and should answer the following questions:

- (a) Does the student demonstrate one or more of the primary reading characteristics of dyslexia in addition to a spelling deficit?
- (b) Are the reading and spelling difficulties the result of a phonological processing deficit?
- (c) Are the reading, spelling, and phonological processing deficits unexpected? Does the student demonstrate cognitive ability to support age level academic learning?
- (d) Are there secondary characteristics of dyslexia evident in reading comprehension and written expression?

(e) Does the student have strengths that could be assets? Are there coexisting deficits that may complicate identification and the response to intervention and may deserve further assessment and intervention?

(6) The school-based decision making team must use these five key questions to determine if the student needs dyslexia intervention services. The information gleaned from these questions reflects components of the definition of dyslexia as expressed in AK Code XXXX. If the level II dyslexia screening conducted by the school district indicates a student exhibits characteristics of dyslexia (first three questions answered with a “yes”), the student shall be considered to have met the typical profile of a student with dyslexia and should be provided intervention services (XXXX) using a dyslexia program delivered with fidelity as intended by the publisher.

(7) If the initial, level I, or level II dyslexia screening indicates that a student has characteristics of dyslexia or is not proficient for any reason, the Response to Intervention (RTI) process shall be used to address the needs of the student.

(x) ensure that evaluations of all children suspected of having a disability, including evaluation of 3-, 4-, or 5- year-old children enrolled in preschool programs, are not delayed or denied because of implementation of an RTI strategy.

(8) If it is determined that the student has functional difficulties in the academic environment

due to dyslexia, the necessary accommodations or equipment for the student shall be provided

under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 97, U.S.C. § 79and Title II of the Americans with

Disabilities Act, 4U.S.C. §§ -65

(B) Each student’s reading proficiency must be reassessed by the tool listed [Section 4.\(A\)\(1\)](#) or through teacher observations at the beginning of the grade following the

intensive reading instruction. The student must continue to be provided with intensive reading instruction until the reading deficiency is remedied.

Section 7 Reading Deficiency and Parental Notification

(A) Beginning with the 2020-2021 school year, if a K-2 student's reading deficiency, as identified in paragraph [Section 5.\(A\)\(1\)](#) or Section 6 shows that a student is at risk, or at some risk the teacher and the other personnel shall communicate and discuss with the parent the following information:

(1) The State's goal is for all children in Alaska to graduate from high school having attained skill levels that adequately prepare them for postsecondary studies or for the workforce, and research demonstrates that achieving reading competency by third grade is a critical milestone in achieving this goal;

(2) The nature of the student's significant reading deficiency, including a clear explanation of what the significant reading deficiency is and the basis upon which the teacher identified the significant reading deficiency;

(3) If the student enters fourth grade without achieving reading competency, he or she is significantly more likely to fall behind in all subject areas beginning in fourth grade and continuing in later grades. If the student's reading skill deficiencies are not remediated, it is likely that the student will not have the skills necessary to complete the course work required to graduate from high school.

(4) Reading skills are critical to success in school. Under State law, the student qualifies for and the local education provider is required to provide targeted, scientifically based or evidence-based interventions to remediate the student's specific, diagnosed reading skill deficiencies, which interventions are designed to enable the student to achieve reading competency and attain the skills necessary to achieve the state's academic achievement goals;

(5) The parent plays a central role in supporting the student's efforts to achieve reading competency, the parent is strongly encouraged to work with the student's teacher;

(5.1?) A Reading Competency Plan will be created in partnership with the parent that prescribes the evidence-based interventions that will be provided to remedy the reading deficiency.

(6) There are serious implications to a student entering fourth grade with a significant reading deficiency and, therefore, if the student continues to have a significant reading deficiency at the end of the school year, under state law, the parent, the student's teacher, and other personnel of the local education provider are required to meet and consider retention as an intervention strategy and determine whether the student, despite having a significant reading deficiency, is able to maintain adequate academic progress at the next grade level.

Section 8 Section: Reading Competency Plans

Any student in Kindergarten or grades 1-3 who exhibits a deficiency in reading at any time, based upon assessments or teacher observation shall receive an individual reading competency plan no later than 30 days after the identification of the reading deficiency. The reading competency plan shall be created by the teacher, principal, other pertinent school personnel and the parent(s), and shall describe the evidence-based reading intervention services the student will receive to remedy the reading deficit. Each student must receive intensive reading intervention until the student no longer has a deficiency in reading.

Section 9 Retention and Parental Notification

Section: Reading Competency Plans

Any student in Kindergarten or grades 1-3 who exhibits a deficiency in reading at any time, based upon assessments or teacher observation shall receive an individual reading competency plan no later than 30 days after the identification of the reading deficiency. The reading competency plan shall be created by the teacher, principal, other pertinent school personnel and the parent(s), and shall describe the evidence-based reading intervention services the student will receive to remedy the reading

deficit. Each student must receive intensive reading intervention until the student no longer has a deficiency in reading.

(A) Beginning with the 20XX-20XY school year, if the student's reading deficiency, as identified in [Section 5 or 6](#) or on the results of the Alaska State Reading Standards Based Assessment, and is not remedied by the end of grade 3, as demonstrated by scoring at XXX or higher on the state annual accountability assessment in reading for grade 3, the student must be retained.

(B) Elimination of social promotion — No student may be assigned to a grade level based solely on age or other factors that constitute social promotion.

(C) Good Cause Exemptions — The district school board may only promote students not meeting the academic requirements for good cause. Good cause exemptions shall be limited to the following:

(1) Limited English proficient students who have had less than 2 years of instruction in an English Language Learner program.

(2) Third Grade Standards. Regulation must be established to set criteria for the student reading portfolio and to define "mastery" of all grade 3 state reading standards.

(7) Requests for good cause exemptions – Requests for Good Cause Exemptions – Requests to exempt students from the mandatory retention requirement using one of the good cause exemptions as described in paragraph (F) shall be made consistent with the following:

Documentation shall be submitted from the student's teacher to the school principal that indicates that the promotion of the student is appropriate. Such documentation shall consist only of the good cause exemption being requested, and the existing reading improvement plan or Individual Education Plan, as applicable.

1 The school principal shall review and discuss the recommendation with the
2 teacher and make the determination as to whether the student meets one of the
3 good cause exemptions. If the school principal determines that the student met
4 one of the good cause exemptions based on the documentation provided, the
5 school principal shall make such recommendation in writing to the district school
6 superintendent. The district school superintendent shall accept or reject the
7 school principal's recommendation in writing.

8 **(D) Successful progression for retained readers —** – Beginning with the
9 (xxxx) school year, students retained must be provided intensive reading
10 intervention to remedy the student's specific reading deficiency. The reading
11 intervention services must include effective instructional strategies to accelerate
12 student progress. Each school district shall conduct a review of student reading
13 competency plans for all students retained in grade 3. The review shall address
14 additional supports and services needed to remedy the identified area(s) of
15 reading deficiency. The district shall provide the following for retained students:

16 A highly effective teacher of reading as demonstrated by student reading
17 performance data and teacher performance evaluations.

18 Reading intervention services and supports to correct the identified area(s) of
19 reading deficiency, including, but not limited to:

20 More dedicated time than the previous school year in scientifically research-
21 based reading instruction and intervention;

22 Use of reading strategies and/or programs that are evidence-based and have
23 proven results in accelerating student reading achievement within the same
24 school year;

25 Daily targeted small group reading intervention based on student needs;

26 Explicit and systematic instruction with more detailed explanations, more
27 extensive opportunities for guided practice, and more opportunities for error
28 correction and feedback; and

1 Frequently monitoring the reading progress of each student's reading skills
2 throughout the school year and adjust instruction according to student needs.

3 The option of a transitional instructional setting. Such setting shall
4 specifically be designed to produce learning gains sufficient to meet grade
5 4 performance standards in all other core academic areas while continuing
6 to correct the area(s) of reading deficiency. (d) Implement a policy for the
7 midyear promotion of any student retained who can demonstrate that he
8 or she is a successful and independent reader, reading at or above grade
9 level, and ready to be promoted to grade 4. Tools that school districts may
10 use in reevaluating any student retained may include subsequent
11 assessments, alternative assessments, and portfolio reviews, in
12 accordance with rules of the State Board of Education. Students promoted
13 during the school year after November 1 must demonstrate proficiency
14 above that required to score at Level 2 on the grade 3 state accountability
15 exam, as determined by the State Board of Education. The State Board of
16 Education shall adopt standards that provide a reasonable expectation
17 that the student's progress is sufficient to master appropriate 4th grade
18 level reading skills.

19 (3) In addition to required reading enhancement and acceleration strategies in
20 Section 8(D)(1)(b), provide parents of students to be retained with at least two of
21 the following instructional options:

22 (a) Supplemental tutoring in scientifically research-based reading services
23 in addition to the regular reading block, including tutoring before and/or
24 after school.

25 (b) A "Read at Home" plan outlined in a parental contract, including
26 participation in "Families Building Better Readers Workshops" and regular
27 parent-guided home reading.

28 (c) A mentor or tutor with specialized reading training.

1 (d) The parents of each pupil will be given a free subscription to at least
2 one literacy and language development software program containing
3 critical functions such as:

4 (1) The program or online program must differentiate instruction for
5 each pupil as pursuant [to Section 3\(C \)](#)(6) with a mentor or tutor
6 with specialized reading training pursuant to Section (3) (G)(3)(c)

7 (2) The software program must include instruction individualized to
8 teach each pupil the five strands of literacy; Phonics, Phonemic
9 Awareness, Vocabulary, Comprehension, and Fluency and must
10 differentiate instruction for each pupil in these critical functions.

11 (3) Activities in the software must be built to deliver evidenced
12 based reading instruction virtually by Speech Language
13 Pathologists and not computerized voices.

14 (4) The software program must contain internal assessments,
15 tracking, and reports for teachers, administrators and parents. The
16 software program must have additional resources to enable the
17 teacher to more effectively meet the needs of each pupil.

18 (5) The software program must provide immediate feedback to
19 students and automatically remediate when needed.

20 (6) The software program must include grade-level appropriate
21 digital books with literature text and informational text.

22 (7) The State Department of Education shall initiate a request for
23 proposal (RFP) to select at least one literacy and language
24 development software program to be made available to all K-12
25 Students deemed reading deficient; and,
26

1 (i) Report to the Department of Education, in the manner described by the
2 department, the progress of students in the class at the end of the first
3 semester.

4 (viii) Report to the State Board of Education, as requested, on the
5 specific intensive reading interventions and supports implemented
6 at the school district level. The Commissioner of Education shall
7 annually prescribe the required components of requested reports.

8 (ix) Provide a student who has been retained in grade 3 and has
9 received intensive instructional services but is still not ready for
10 grade promotion, as determined by the school district, the option of
11 being placed in a transitional instructional setting. Such setting shall
12 specifically be designed to produce learning gains sufficient to meet
13 grade 4 performance standards while continuing to remediate the
14 areas of reading deficiency.

15 * Sec. 5. AS 14.07.020(a) is amended to read: (a) The department
16 shall (1) exercise general supervision over the public schools of
17 the state except the University shall adopt or recommend plans,
18 administer and evaluate grants to improve school performance
19 awarded under AS 14.03.125, and adopt regulations for the
20 improvement of the public schools;

21
22 (5) establish, in coordination with the Department of Health and
23 Social Services, a program for the continuing education of
24 children who are held in detention facilities in the state during the
25 period of detention²⁷ (18) devise a statewide early childhood
26 education plan for students that (A) incorporates the model
27 curriculum developed by the department under AS 14.07.030(13);

28 * Sec. 6. AS 14.07.020(c) is amended to read: (c) In this section,
29 "pre-elementary school" means a school for children[AGES] three

1 through five years of age, if the school's primary function is
2 educational, and a prekindergarten program for children four years
3 of age that is provided by a school district.

4 5 **Section 10. Charter, Optional, and Alternative School**

6 (A) Charter, Optional, and Alternative Schools shall comply with fully with 4 AAC
7 52.100. Child find and Universal Screening pursuant to [Section 5](#). (A)(2)

8 **Section 11. Annual report** — In addition to the above requirements, each school district
9 must annually report to the parent of each student the progress of the student toward
10 achieving state and district expectations for proficiency in reading, writing, science, and
11 mathematics. The district must report to the parent the student's results on each annual
12 state accountability assessment. The evaluation of each student's progress must be
13 based upon the student's classroom work, observations, tests, district and state
14 assessments, and other relevant information. Progress reporting must be provided to
15 the parent in writing in a format adopted by the district school board.

16 (1) Each district school must annually publish in the local newspaper, and report
17 in writing to the State Board of Education by September 1 of each year, the
18 following information on the prior school year:

19 (a) The provisions of this section relating to public school student
20 progression and the district school board's policies and procedures on
21 student retention and promotion.

22 (b) By grade, the number and percentage of all students in grades 3
23 through 10 performing at Levels 1 and 2 on the reading portion of the
24 annual state accountability assessment.

25 (c) By grade, the number and percentage of all students retained in
26 grades 3 through 10.

(d) Information on the total number and percentage of students who were promoted for good cause, by each category of good cause as specified above.

(e) Any revisions to the district school board's policy on student retention and promotion from the prior year.

(2) The Department of Education shall establish a uniform format for school districts to report the information required. The format shall be developed with input from district school boards and shall be provided not later than 90 days prior to the annual due date. The department shall annually compile the information required along with state-level summary information, and report such information to the public, Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Section 12. State Board Authority and Responsibilities:

(1) The State Board of Education shall have authority to enforce this chapter.

(2) The department shall provide technical assistance as needed to aid district school boards in administering this section.

(3) The State Board of Education shall evaluate and recommend legislation on K-3 regular education teacher and K-12 Special education teacher licensure for reading teachers based on all section of Alaska's Urgent Reading for All and Dyslexia Act.

(4) The State Board of Education shall evaluate a minimum of three state Dyslexia Resource Guides and Handbooks published by states from 2015 to 2018 for adoption by the State of Alaska to provide school districts, public schools, and teachers with guidance to meet the provisions of this bill.

(5) Effective immediately, the State Board of Education shall add dyslexia to the standard IEP form that planning and placement teams use to describe the special education and related services for a special education student. All LEAs shall add "SLD - Dyslexia" under the "specific learning disabilities" heading in the

1 "primary disability" section of the form. Dyslexia is covered by state and federal
2 special education laws, but previously did not appear on the IEP form. Dyslexia is
3 a reading disability often characterized by difficulty in decoding letters and words.

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