

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Session:
State Capitol, Room 504
Juneau, AK 99801

Phone: (907) 465-4968
Toll-free: 1 (800) 773-4968



Interim:
1500 West Benson Boulevard
Anchorage, AK 99503

Phone: (907) 269-0117
Toll-free: 1 (800) 773-4968

Email: Senator.Mia.Costello@akleg.gov

Senator Mia Costello District K – West Anchorage

SENATE BILL NO. 149: SMART START

“An Act relating to the start time of a day in session for public schools.”

SPONSOR STATEMENT

Senate Bill 149, or “Smart Start,” seeks to align the start times for high schools in Alaska so that the school day begins at 8:30 a.m. or later. This proposed change will pose the greatest benefit to adolescent students, as their biological sleep cycle is out of alignment with many of the earlier school start times currently in place. A later start time is one way to address the growing issue of adolescent sleep deprivation, which is linked to poor performance in school, as well as mental health and behavioral problems. By putting students first, they are better able to perform well in school.

Medical research has presented evidence that supports the implementation of a later start time in secondary schools. Both the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Academy of Sleep Medicine recommend that the start time for secondary schools be moved to 8:30 a.m. at the earliest, as SB 149 seeks to accomplish.