



# Representative Chris Tuck

Alaska State Legislature  
State Capitol, Room 216  
Juneau, AK 99801

Phone: (907) 465-2095  
Toll-free: (866) 465-2095

## MEMORANDUM

Date: May 4, 2021

To: Members of the House Education Committee

From: Löki Gale Tobin, Office of Senator Tom Begich

RE: **Notes for the early education components of CS HB 164**

---

**(Page 2, Line 4) Section 2.** Amends AS 14.03.040, Day in session to clarify that a day in session for grades 4 through 12 is at least 5 hours, while a day in session for grades 1– 3 is at least 4 hours. This section is not repealed.

**Section 3.** Amends AS 14.03.060 to permit the Department of Early Education and Development (DEED) the ability to approve and supervise a district early education program.

**Section 4.** Repeals DEED's ability to approve an early education program on June 30, 2034. This is part of the overall sunset clauses included in this legislation as DEED will no longer be able to approve a pre-K program for inclusion in a school district's ADM counts.

**(Page 3, line 23) Sections 7 - 9.** Amend AS 14.03.078 directing DEED to report on early education grant programs, Parent as Teachers, and DEED supported Reading Intervention programs in their annual report to the Alaska State Legislature. Section 9 directs school districts to display administrative employee statistics in a prominent place and on their website and provides a definition of administrative employee.

**(Page 6, line 22) Sections 10-12.** Amend AS 14.03.080 to allow children who are at least four to attend publicly provided early education programs. The current statute directs school districts to set minimum standards for school entry. Instead of establishing a minimum age, changes to Section 10 acknowledge not all students may be ready for early education programs at age 4.

The changes made in Section 10 will replace current statute AS 14.03.080 subsection (d), which permits a child who is at least five years of age as of Sept 1<sup>st</sup> to attend public kindergarten. AS 14.03.080 subsection (d) is repealed in Section 39 of this legislation, and on June 30, 2034, Section 10 is repealed and replaced with Section 11 and Section 12, which reinstates the current date of school start.

**(Page 8, line 17) Section 14.** Adds a new section under AS 14.03, Article 4. Early Education Programs.

**(Page 8) Section 14.** Directs DEED to provide training and assistance to school districts that do not have or need to improve their high-quality, locally designed, culturally responsive early education program. Districts must meet program standards to receive DEED approval of their early education program.

**(Page 8 through page 9)** DEED is directed to also provide financial aid to school districts through three-year early education grants, with additional support years possible if a district cannot get approval for their program after three years.

Based on performance rankings established under AS 14.03.123, DEED will prioritize grants to school districts that have an insufficient number of children enrolled in other types of high-quality, locally designed, culturally responsive early education programs.

Unless the legislature chooses to appropriate a different amount, grants awarded to school districts may not exceed \$3,000,000 each fiscal year.

Districts that already have a high-quality, locally designed, culturally responsive early education program that meets the requirements established under AS 14.07.165 may have their early education program approved by DEED, which will allow their early education students to be included in their Average Daily Membership (ADM) counts.

Please note ADM counts determine foundation formula funding.

Approved early education programs may be reviewed by DEED to ensure compliance with the standards established under AS 14.07.165. DEED is directed to establish a statewide program to support a parent/guardian in evidence-based early education for children under five years of age.

Please note that nothing in this section prohibits a district from using its own funds. Participation in the grant program is not required. School districts are asked to work with existing early education programs before applying for a grant.

**(Page 10) Section 14.** Codifies AS 14.03.420, the Parent as Teachers (PAT) program. This statewide program must meet evidence-based best practice guidelines to help prepare children for school and support parents in understanding child development and developmental milestones.

DEED must include guidelines that reduce child abuse and neglect, increase immunizations and overall health, reduce developmental delays, increase parent involvement, and prepare students for school.

This section also directs DEED to enter into local partnerships to implement the Parent as Teachers program.

**Page 10, line 31) Section 15.** amends AS 14.07.020 and directs DEED to supervise all early education programs and approve those early education programs established under AS 14.03.410. This section also directs DEED to establish a new

reading program under AS 14.07.065 and offer reading intervention programs to participating schools AS 14.30.770.

**Section 16** repeals all the changes described to Section 15 on June 30, 2034.

**(Page 16, line 2) Section 17.** Aligns terminology for an early education program that a local school district will operate.

**(Page 16, starting on line 29) Section 18.** Directs the state board of education to establish regulations for a locally designed, evidence-based, culturally responsive early education program that meets any and all federal requirements for early education programs. Section 18 also directs the state board to establish the developmentally appropriate length of the school day for kindergarten students. This section is repealed under Section 40 on June 30, 2034.

**(Page 19, starting on line 25) Section 25.** Adds a new subsection under AS 14.17.500 to establish that a student of an early education program as approved by DEED under AS 14.07.020(a)(8) counts as  $\frac{1}{2}$  an ADM and that programs that receive other state or federal funds cannot receive additional funding under this section.

**(Page 20) Section 25.** States that DEED cannot approve early education programs with the intent that those students count toward a district's ADM if those students would increase the state's allocation for approved early education programs over \$3,00,000 in that fiscal year. This section also permits DEED to partially approve a district's early education program.

**Section 26.** Repeals changes made in Section 25 regarding counting students in a district's ADM on June 30, 2034.

**(Page 21, starting on line 9) Section 29.** Permits schools to count early education program students in their ADM counts. Section 30 repeals these changes on June 30, 2034.

**(Page 39) Section 43.** Describes a comprehensive report due to the 38<sup>th</sup> Alaska State Legislature on the effectiveness of early education and reading programs described in Section 35.

**(Page 40) Section 44.** Provides transition language stating that DEED may not approve early education programs if that approval results in more than \$3,000,000 in fiscal year 2022. In subsequent fiscal years, DEED may approve up to \$3,000,000 in new early education programs, resulting in a compounding effect.

**Section 45.** Permits DEED to begin adopting regulations prior to the effective date of this act.