



# **Anchorage School District**

## **Education Center**

5530 E. Northern Lights Blvd. • Anchorage, AK 99504 • 907-742-4000 • [www.asdk12.org](http://www.asdk12.org)

January 31, 2022

Rep. Ken McCarty  
Alaska State Legislature  
State Capitol Room 428  
Juneau AK, 99801

Dear Representative McCarty,

As superintendent of Alaska's largest school district, I am writing today to offer support for House Bill 108: Concurrent Secondary & Trade School.

As the state and nation continue to grapple with massive skilled employee shortages and an aging workforce, it is more critical than ever to support policies that increase equitable access to Career & Technical Education (CTE). In Alaska and across the nation, CTE has a proven record of preparing students for success in life after high school.

Data show that students who matriculate through CTE programs have higher graduation rates and increased economic mobility, often with zero or minimum post-secondary debt. Alaskan industries such as healthcare, oil & gas, mining, maritime, and construction are dependent on highly skilled employees whose wage growth is outpacing other industries.

Yet, Alaska faces challenges in meeting the demand for a technically skilled workforce. Many school districts lack the human and financial capital to fund dedicated CTE instructors with the necessary qualifications to teach highly skilled classes in the trades, information technology, healthcare, and construction.

This challenge will continue to grow as infrastructure bills move forward through the Federal Administration that pave the way for expanded investment in Alaska's infrastructure. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic has strained our healthcare resources and exacerbated the need for trained medical professionals across the state.

*Educating All Students for Success in Life*

Anchorage School Board Margo Bellamy, President  
Andy Holleman, Vice President Kelly Lessens, Treasurer  
Carl Jacobs, Clerk Dave Donley

Pat Higgins  
Dora Wilson

Superintendent Dr. Deena Bishop

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HB 108 allows a policy that aims to help our state bridge the gap between available training resources and secondary school students. By providing access to a curated list of vetted, concurrent technical training programs, students and districts can identify training opportunities which align with students' career interest areas.

In addition, HB 108 will allow expanded access to work-based learning programs such as on-the-job training, which is a mark of high quality CTE programs. Such training and other work-based learning experiences will allow students to gain valuable training that cannot be replicated in the classroom.

ASD supports HB 108 as it will enhance opportunities for students. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Deena M. Bishop", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Deena M. Bishop, Ed.D.  
Superintendent



Office of the Superintendent • PO Box 108 • Glenallen, AK 99588  
(907) 822-3234 ext. 1223 • fax (907) 822-3949

January 24, 2022

Representative Ken McCarty  
House Labor and Commerce Committee  
State Capitol  
Juneau AK, 99801

RE: Supports HB 108

Dear Representative McCarty,

Thank you for presenting HB 108 as it is an effort to increase vocational learning opportunities toward real workforce readiness for Alaskan students. We welcome and support HB108.

Vocational learning experience provides a successful and effective avenue for advanced entry into the workforce. The concurrent learning process of students in secondary education, whether toward college or trade certification, avails greater application of curriculum and sooner opportunities for our students in the workforce. HB 108 also encourages collaborative efforts in our community, as master-level professionals are able to instruct our students toward respected industry standard certifications.

We have witnessed a decline in the workforce in our community. We are encouraged by the efforts of HB 108 to inspire students, avail career opportunities earlier in our student's life, assure a stronger workforce, and secure fiscally stable residents within our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Therese Ashton", written in a cursive style.

Thérèse Ashton  
Superintendent  
Copper River School District



Kodiak Island Borough School District  
722 Mill Bay Road  
Kodiak, Alaska 99615  
(907) 486-7550

January 21, 2022

Representative Ken McCarty  
House Labor and Commerce Committee  
State Capitol  
Juneau AK, 99801

RE: Supports HB 108

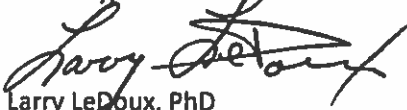
Dear Representative McCarty,

Thank you for presenting HB 108 as it is an effort to increase vocational learning opportunities toward real workforce readiness for Alaskan students. We welcome and support HB108.

Vocational learning experience provides a successful and effective avenue for advanced entry into the workforce. The concurrent learning process of students in secondary education, whether toward college or trade certification, avails greater application of curriculum and sooner opportunities for our students in the workforce. HB 108 also encourages collaborative efforts in our community, as master level professionals are be able to instructor our students toward respected industry standard certifications.

We have witnessed a decline in the workforce in our community. We are encouraged by the efforts of HB 108 to inspire students, avail career opportunities earlier in our student's life, assure a stronger workforce, and secure fiscally stable residents within our community.

Sincerely,

  
Larry LeDoux, PhD  
Superintendent



## *Nome Public Schools*

PO Box 131~Nome, Alaska 99762  
Phone: (907) 443-2231~Fax: (907) 443-5144

May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Representative Ken McCarty  
House District 13  
Alaska State Legislature House of Representatives

RE: House Bill 108

Dear Representative McCarty:

Thank you for our recent discussion and for the opportunity to review House Bill 108 and provide input and commentary.

I am in support of continued efforts to address the need for increased vocational education and internship opportunities for students, especially since there is a dire need for skilled laborers in rural Alaskan communities such as mine. Opportunities to allow students to participate in high quality programs for these purposes while also earning credits toward high school graduation are highly desirable, and there are often few opportunities outside of whatever shop/CTE courses a school district is able to offer.

The concern I have is how the programs as outlined in the current bill would be implemented in a rural district. Physical access to instructors who could teach such a program in small rural districts is likely to be severely restricted, as many districts do not have a full-time CTE/shop teacher with the qualifications under this bill to work with an agency; this would necessitate the partner agency providing the instructor, who may or may not be able or willing to physically travel and reside in the desired location for the length of time needed for the program. In addition, each school would need to have appropriate equipment available if an instructor is available to reside locally, or the instructor would need to bring equipment with him/her. Finally, having to host an outside instructor for a significant length of time may cause additional pressure on available district housing, as many small villages do not have hotels or similar lodging available.

Also, it would be of great benefit and greatly expand the pool of program providers to allow local employers in rural Alaska who have high qualified staff and would be willing to partner with local school districts, as opposed to restricting it to union shops.

I believe your bill is a great starting point, and would support it if my concerns are clearly addressed. As it is written, it would benefit primarily our road districts or those which are larger hub communities, and would be inaccessible to districts comprised primarily of smaller villages or communities without significant financial outlay on the part of the district.

Again, thank you for your support of education and vo-tech education specifically; I am pleased to support your efforts in this direction and look forward to your bill making progress in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jamie Burgess", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jamie Burgess, Superintendent  
Nome Public Schools

## Rep. Ken McCarty

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**From:** Smolin, Carin <carin.smolin@juneauschools.org>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 23, 2021 12:14 PM  
**To:** Rep. Ken McCarty  
**Subject:** HB 108

Greetings Rep. McCarty,

Thank you for taking the time to talk with me about HB 108. I am submitting this letter of support for HB 108: *An Act relating to concurrent vocational education, training, and on the job trade experience programs for students enrolled in public secondary schools; relating to child labor; and providing for an effective date.*"

The Juneau School District offers career pathway training in the trades from *Intro to Trades* classes to *Basic Construction, Welding, Small Engines, Auto Mechanics, and Basic Woods* classes with a capstone class experience in *House Build*, where students are engaged in a hands-on, experiential learning, building a house from foundation laying to finishing. We work closely with our local trades and industry partners, and UAS Construction training programs engaging students in dual credit and industry certifications, and offer strong pathways to further training, apprenticeship programs, and local jobs.

We welcome the language of this bill to strengthen the support for training opportunities for our students. We hope there will be funding for supporting out of school training opportunities and for staffing to help to connect students with work-based learning opportunities to enrich their experiences and set them on a path for postsecondary success.

Thank you for supporting career and technical education and the opportunity to comment on this bill.

Sincerely,

Carin Smolin

Carin Smolin  
Career and Technical Education Coordinator  
Juneau School District  
10014 Crazy Horse Drive  
Juneau, AK 99801  
907.523.1877  
[carin.smolin@juneauschools.org](mailto:carin.smolin@juneauschools.org)