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CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 173()

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY

**Offered:
Referred:**

Sponsor(s): REPRESENTATIVE TARR

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 **"An Act relating to state education policy; relating to school climate and connectedness;**
2 **establishing the School Climate and School Connectedness Improvement Committee;**
3 **and providing for an effective date."**

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

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

7 SHORT TITLE. This Act may be known as the School Climate and School
8 Connectedness Improvement Act.

9 * **Sec. 2.** AS 14.03.015 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

10 (b) It is the policy of the state to acknowledge and take into account the
11 principles of early childhood and youth brain development and, whenever possible,
12 consider the concepts of early adversity, toxic stress, childhood trauma, and the
13 promotion of resilience through protective relationships, supports, self-regulation, and
14 services.

* **Sec. 3.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to read:

SCHOOL CLIMATE AND SCHOOL CONNECTEDNESS IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE. (a) The School Climate and School Connectedness Improvement Committee is established as an advisory committee in the Department of Education and Early Development.

(b) The committee consists of the following members appointed by the governor:

- (1) two school superintendents;
- (2) two retired school superintendents;
- (3) two school principals;
- (4) two retired school principals;
- (5) two school board members;
- (6) two former school board members;
- (7) three pre-elementary through grade 12 teachers;
- (8) three retired pre-elementary through grade 12 teachers;
- (9) four parents of kindergarten through grade 12 students;
- (10) two kindergarten through grade 12 students;
- (11) one representative from the division in the Department of Health and Social Services with jurisdiction over juvenile justice who is involved in direct youth services;
- (12) two school social workers;
- (13) two school counselors;
- (14) two members of an Alaska Native organization; in this paragraph, "Alaska Native organization" includes an Indian tribe as defined in 25 U.S.C. 5304, a corporation organized under 43 U.S.C. 1601 et seq. (Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act), as amended, and a tribal organization as defined in 25 U.S.C. 5304.

(c) When appointing committee members, the governor shall consider

- (1) geographic representation and appoint not fewer than six members who reside in communities that are rural, as defined in AS 14.43.700; and
- (2) representation across grade levels, appointing at least one current or retired teacher of students in each of the following:
 - (A) pre-elementary;

(B) kindergarten through grade two;

(C) grades three through five;

(D) grades six through eight; and

(E) grades nine through twelve.

(d) Committee members serve without compensation and are not entitled to per diem.

(e) The committee shall meet at least once a year. Meetings may be held by audio or video teleconference.

(f) The committee shall organize regional and subject-matter subcommittees to address the specific needs of English language learners, vocational and technical education, special education, student athletes, and other subject matter the committee considers necessary.

(g) The committee may consult with an organization that develops or promotes education policy for the purpose of carrying out the committee's responsibilities under this section. The organization may not receive compensation for services rendered under this subsection.

* **Sec. 4.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to read:

DISTRICT SCHOOL CLIMATE AND SCHOOL CONNECTEDNESS PLANS. (a) Each local school district shall develop a school climate and school connectedness plan to improve student, staff, and family relationships and establish connections and partnerships between district schools and local communities. The School Climate and School Connectedness Improvement Committee established under sec. 3 of this Act shall support districts in plan development and implementation.

(b) A district shall designate district representatives to coordinate with the committee and draft the district's plan. The plan must identify actions the district will take to improve school climate and school connectedness.

(c) A plan may incorporate use of

(1) social and emotional learning;

(2) trauma-informed and healing-centered practices;

(3) instruction in cultural competence and alignment with indigenous values;

(4) multi-tiered support for behavioral intervention, including restorative

1 practices that are nonshaming, nonpunitive, and effective in addressing conflict and repairing
2 relationships;

3 (5) methods for reducing racial disparities, disproportionate behavior
4 responses, and suspensions or expulsions;

5 (6) culturally relevant practices adapted to the local district.

6 * **Sec. 5.** The uncoded law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
7 read:

8 PLAN SUBMISSION. On or before January 1, 2024, each school district shall submit
9 a school climate and school connectedness plan to the commissioner of education and early
10 development, the senate secretary, and the chief clerk of the house of representatives and
11 notify the legislature that the plan is available.

12 * **Sec. 6.** Sections 1 and 3 - 5 of this Act are repealed July 1, 2024.

13 * **Sec. 7.** This Act takes effect July 1, 2022.