

CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 225(EDC)

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY THE SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Offered: 3/31/22

Referred: Labor and Commerce, Finance

Sponsor(s): SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 **"An Act relating to a paraprofessional training program; creating a limited teacher**
2 **resident certificate; creating a teacher residency program; relating to requirements to**
3 **issue a teacher certificate; relating to subject-matter expert limited teacher certificates;**
4 **relating to limited teacher certificates; creating a teacher registered apprenticeship**
5 **program; and creating a teacher recruitment and retention fund."**

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

7 * **Section 1.** AS 14.07.020(a) is amended to read:

8 (a) The department shall

9 (1) exercise general supervision over the public schools of the state
10 except the University of Alaska;

11 (2) study the conditions and needs of the public schools of the state,
12 adopt or recommend plans, administer and evaluate grants to improve school
13 performance awarded under AS 14.03.125, and adopt regulations for the improvement

1 of the public schools; the department may consult with the University of Alaska to
2 develop secondary education requirements to improve student achievement in college
3 preparatory courses;

4 (3) provide advisory and consultative services to all public school
5 governing bodies and personnel;

6 (4) prescribe by regulation a minimum course of study for the public
7 schools; the regulations must provide that, if a course in American Sign Language is
8 given, the course shall be given credit as a course in a foreign language;

9 (5) establish, in coordination with the Department of Health and Social
10 Services, a program for the continuing education of children who are held in juvenile
11 detention facilities or juvenile treatment facilities, as those terms are defined in
12 AS 47.12.990, in the state during the period of detention or treatment;

13 (6) accredit those public schools that meet accreditation standards
14 prescribed by regulation by the department; these regulations shall be adopted by the
15 department and presented to the legislature during the first 10 days of any regular
16 session, and become effective 45 days after presentation or at the end of the session,
17 whichever is earlier, unless disapproved by a resolution concurred in by a majority of
18 the members of each house;

19 (7) prescribe by regulation, after consultation with the state fire
20 marshal and the state sanitarian, standards that will ensure healthful and safe
21 conditions in the public and private schools of the state, including a requirement of
22 physical examinations and immunizations in pre-elementary schools; the standards for
23 private schools may not be more stringent than those for public schools;

24 (8) exercise general supervision over pre-elementary schools that
25 receive direct state or federal funding;

26 (9) exercise general supervision over elementary and secondary
27 correspondence study programs offered by municipal school districts or regional
28 educational attendance areas; the department may also offer and make available to any
29 Alaskan through a centralized office a correspondence study program;

30 (10) accredit private schools that request accreditation and that meet
31 accreditation standards prescribed by regulation by the department; nothing in this

1 paragraph authorizes the department to require religious or other private schools to be
2 licensed;

3 (11) review plans for construction of new public elementary and
4 secondary schools and for additions to and major rehabilitation of existing public
5 elementary and secondary schools and, in accordance with regulations adopted by the
6 department, determine and approve the extent of eligibility for state aid of a school
7 construction or major maintenance project; for the purposes of this paragraph, "plans"
8 include educational specifications, schematic designs, projected energy consumption
9 and costs, and final contract documents;

10 (12) provide educational opportunities in the areas of vocational
11 education and training, and basic education to individuals over 16 years of age who
12 are no longer attending school; the department may consult with businesses and labor
13 unions to develop a program to prepare students for apprenticeships or internships that
14 will lead to employment opportunities;

15 (13) administer the grants awarded under AS 14.11;

16 (14) establish, in coordination with the Department of Public Safety, a
17 school bus driver training course;

18 (15) require the reporting of information relating to school disciplinary
19 and safety programs under AS 14.33.120 and of incidents of disruptive or violent
20 behavior;

21 (16) establish by regulation criteria, based on low student performance,
22 under which the department may intervene in a school district to improve instructional
23 practices, as described in AS 14.07.030(a)(14) or (15); the regulations must include

24 (A) a notice provision that alerts the district to the deficiencies
25 and the instructional practice changes proposed by the department;

26 (B) an end date for departmental intervention, as described in
27 AS 14.07.030(a)(14)(A) and (B) and (15), after the district demonstrates three
28 consecutive years of improvement consisting of not less than two percent
29 increases in student proficiency on standards-based assessments in language
30 arts and mathematics, as provided in AS 14.03.123(f)(1)(A); and

31 (C) a process for districts to petition the department for

continuing or discontinuing the department's intervention;

(17) notify the legislative committees having jurisdiction over education before intervening in a school district under AS 14.07.030(a)(14) or redirecting public school funding under AS 14.07.030(a)(15);

(18) collaborate with the University of Alaska and districts to establish a paraprofessional training program for districts designed to prepare high school students for entry into the teacher registered apprenticeship program established in AS 14.20.700.

* **Sec. 2.** AS 14.20 is amended by adding new sections to read:

Sec. 14.20.013. Limited teacher resident certificate. (a) Notwithstanding AS 14.20.020, the department shall issue a limited teacher resident certificate to a person who meets the requirements of (b) of this section.

(b) To be eligible for a limited teacher resident certificate, a person must

(1) either

(A) hold a baccalaureate degree from an institution of higher education accredited by a recognized regional or national accrediting association or approved by the commissioner and be currently enrolled in an approved

(i) post-baccalaureate teacher education program at a nationally or regionally accredited institution meeting the requirements of AS 14.20.020(b) that provides for completion of the regular teacher certificate education requirements within three years after receipt of a limited teacher resident certificate under this section; or

(ii) nontraditional or alternative teacher education program; or

(B) be currently enrolled in the final year of a baccalaureate degree teacher education program at an institution of higher education accredited by a recognized regional or national accrediting association or approved by the commissioner;

(2) have submitted fingerprints and the fees required by the Department of Public Safety under AS 12.62.160 for criminal justice information and

1 a national criminal history record check to the department; the department must have
 2 submitted the fingerprints and fees to the Department of Public Safety for a report of
 3 criminal justice information under AS 12.62 and a national criminal history record
 4 check under AS 12.62.400, and the person must have been found by the department to
 5 be suitable for employment as a teacher under AS 14.20.020(f); and

6 (3) have taken the competency examination or examinations described
 7 in AS 14.20.020(i).

8 (c) A limited teacher resident certificate is valid for one school year and only
 9 valid while a teacher resident is participating in the teacher residency program
 10 established under AS 14.20.014. A limited teacher resident certificate may be renewed
 11 for two additional school years upon a showing of substantial progress toward
 12 completion of a teacher education program required under (b)(1) of this section and
 13 continued participation in the teacher residency program under AS 14.20.014. In this
 14 subsection, "teacher resident" means a teacher qualified to teach under (b) of this
 15 section.

16 (d) The department shall adopt regulations necessary to implement this section
 17 and shall consult with school districts, regional educational attendance areas, the
 18 University of Alaska, and other stakeholders before adopting regulations as required
 19 under this subsection.

20 (e) The board shall establish standards for the approval of nontraditional and
 21 alternative teacher education programs described in (b)(1)(A)(ii) of this section. The
 22 standards must be comparable to the standards for approving institutions of higher
 23 education under AS 14.20.020(b).

24 **Sec. 14.20.014. Teacher residency program.** (a) The teacher residency
 25 program is established in the department. The department shall adopt regulations to
 26 establish, implement, and govern the program. At a minimum, the regulations must

27 (1) establish a program designed to help a teacher resident work as a
 28 teacher while progressing toward completion of the teacher education program
 29 required under AS 14.20.013(b)(1); the program must require that, during a teacher
 30 resident's first year of participation in the program, the teacher resident teach in
 31 conjunction with a program mentor who is an experienced teacher;

1 (2) allow a school district or a regional educational attendance area to
 2 participate in the program if the school district or regional educational attendance area
 3 provides compensation to a teacher resident who is participating in the program and
 4 working for the school district or regional educational attendance area under the
 5 program; and

6 (3) require that a school district and a regional educational attendance
 7 area participating in the program ensure that a program mentor provided by the
 8 department under this section is trained in accordance with the standards established
 9 by the board under (e) of this section.

10 (b) The department shall

11 (1) provide each teacher resident participating in the program with a
 12 program mentor who is an experienced teacher and who will teach in conjunction with
 13 the teacher resident;

14 (2) help a school district or a regional educational attendance area meet
 15 the standards for the training of program mentors established by the board under (d) of
 16 this section; and

17 (3) help place a teacher resident in a school district or regional
 18 educational attendance area where the teacher resident will work as a teacher while
 19 progressing toward completion of the teacher education program required under
 20 AS 14.20.013(b)(1).

21 (c) Before adopting regulations under (a) of this section, the department shall
 22 consult with school districts, regional educational attendance areas, the University of
 23 Alaska, and other stakeholders.

24 (d) A person employed as a teacher resident under this section is considered a
 25 certificated employee for purposes of AS 14.25 (teachers' retirement system).
 26 Employment as a teacher resident under this section counts as employment for
 27 purposes of acquiring tenure under AS 14.20.150; however, a teacher resident is not
 28 entitled to tenure until the teacher resident receives a teacher certificate under
 29 AS 14.20.020.

30 (e) The board shall establish standards for the training of program mentors as
 31 described in this section.

(f) In this section,

(1) "program" means the teacher residency program established under this section;

(2) "teacher resident" means a teacher qualified to teach under AS 14.20.013(b).

* **Sec. 3.** AS 14.20.020(h) is amended to read:

(h) A person is not eligible for a teacher certificate unless the person has completed **the coursework, training, and examinations** [THREE SEMESTER HOURS] in Alaska studies and [THREE SEMESTER HOURS] in multicultural education or cross-cultural communications **as required by the board by regulation.** However, the commissioner may issue a provisional certificate, valid for **not** [NO] longer than two years, to an applicant who has not completed the **coursework, training, and examinations** [SEMESTER HOURS] required under this subsection at the time of application. **A school district or regional educational attendance area may establish coursework, training, and examination requirements that are more stringent than the coursework, training, and examinations required under this subsection.**

* **Sec. 4.** AS 14.20.020(i) is amended to read:

(i) Beginning on July 1, 1998, a person is not eligible for an initial regular teacher certificate unless the person has taken and successfully completed a competency examination or examinations designated, at the time the person took the test, by the board, **or the person has demonstrated competency through an alternative method under this subsection.** The board shall review nationally recognized examinations that are designed to test the competency of new teachers and shall designate those examinations that it finds adequately test the skills and abilities of new teachers. For each examination designated under this subsection, the board shall establish the minimum acceptable level of performance. **The board may establish an alternative method to test the competency, skills, and abilities of new teachers who have taken but have not successfully completed the competency examination or examinations designated by the board under this subsection.**

* **Sec. 5.** AS 14.20.022(b) is amended to read:

(b) To be eligible for a subject-matter expert limited teacher certificate, a person shall

(1) hold at least a baccalaureate degree from an institution of higher education accredited by a recognized regional or national accrediting association or approved by the commissioner and

(A) have majored or minored in the subject that the person will be teaching; [OR]

(B) have at least five years of experience in the subject matter that the person will be teaching; or

(C) have achieved a passing score, as defined by department regulations, on a subject-matter examination approved by the board;

(2) have submitted fingerprints and the fees required by the Department of Public Safety under AS 12.62.160 for criminal justice information and a national criminal history record check to the department; the department must have submitted the fingerprints and fees to the Department of Public Safety for a report of criminal justice information under AS 12.62 and a national criminal history record check under AS 12.62.400 and the person must have been found by the department to be suitable for employment as a teacher under AS 14.20.020(f); [AND]

(3) be currently enrolled in an approved

(A) post-baccalaureate teacher education program at a nationally or regionally accredited institution meeting the requirements of AS 14.20.020(b) that provides for completion of the regular teacher certificate education requirements within three [TWO] years after receipt of a subject-matter expert limited teacher certificate under this section; or

(B) nontraditional or alternative teacher education program; and

(4) have taken the competency examination or examinations described in AS 14.20.020(i).

* Sec. 6. AS 14.20.022(d) is amended to read:

(d) A subject-matter expert limited teacher certificate is valid for one school

year and may be renewed for two [ONE] additional school years [YEAR] upon a showing of substantial progress toward [TOWARDS] completion of a [THE] teacher education program required under (b)(3) of this section.

* **Sec. 7.** AS 14.20.022(e) is amended to read:

(e) A school district or regional educational attendance area that employs a subject-matter expert teacher shall provide a mentor who is an experienced teacher for the subject-matter expert teacher for at least the first two years [YEAR] of the subject-matter expert teacher's employment in the school district or regional educational attendance area.

* **Sec. 8.** AS 14.20.022 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

(i) The board shall establish standards for the approval of nontraditional and alternative teacher education programs described in (b)(3)(B) of this section. The standards must be comparable to the standards for approving institutions of higher education under AS 14.20.020(b).

* **Sec. 9.** AS 14.20.025 is amended to read:

Sec. 14.20.025. Limited teacher certificates. Notwithstanding AS 14.20.020(b), a person may be issued a limited certificate, valid only in the area of expertise for which it is issued, to teach Alaska Native language or culture, military science, or a vocational or technical course [FOR WHICH THE BOARD DETERMINES BY REGULATION THAT BACCALAUREATE DEGREE TRAINING IS NOT SUFFICIENTLY AVAILABLE]. A limited certificate may be issued under this section only if the school board of the district or regional educational attendance area in which the person will be teaching has requested its issuance. A person who applies for a limited certificate shall demonstrate, as required by regulations adopted by the board, instructional skills and subject matter expertise sufficient to ensure the public that the person is competent as a teacher. The board may require a person issued a limited certificate to undertake academic training as may be required by the board by regulation and make satisfactory progress in the academic training.

* **Sec. 10.** AS 14.20 is amended by adding new sections to read:

Article 8. Teacher Registered Apprenticeship Program.

1 **Sec. 14.20.700. Teacher registered apprenticeship program.** (a) The teacher
2 registered apprenticeship program is established in the department.

3 (b) The department shall

4 (1) adopt regulations to establish, implement, and govern the program;
5 at a minimum, the regulations must establish

6 (A) a program for school districts designed to help
7 paraprofessionals or persons who possess a valid limited teacher certificate
8 issued under AS 14.20.025 continue to work as a paraprofessional or teacher
9 under a limited teacher certificate issued under AS 14.20.025 while earning
10 credit toward a bachelor's degree and teaching certification; the program must

11 (i) be a multi-year program designed for a person who
12 has not yet obtained a bachelor's degree;

13 (ii) include tiered compensation and responsibilities that
14 increase as the participant gains pedagogical expertise; and

15 (iii) be designed to allow participants who successfully
16 complete the program to obtain a teacher certificate; and

17 (B) program standards that meet the requirements necessary to
18 qualify the program as a registered apprenticeship program under 29 U.S.C. 50
19 - 50c (National Apprenticeship Act);

20 (2) establish a standard form a school district may use to apply to
21 register the program as a registered apprenticeship program under 29 U.S.C. 50 - 50c
22 (National Apprenticeship Act);

23 (3) consult with the Department of Labor and Workforce Development
24 and the United States Department of Labor before establishing the standard form
25 described in (2) of this subsection; and

26 (4) in conjunction with the Department of Labor and Workforce
27 Development, help school districts

28 (A) develop programs established under this section; and

29 (B) secure funding for the programs from sources other than
30 the state.

31 (c) A school district may apply to register a program established under this

1 section as a registered apprenticeship program under 29 U.S.C. 50 - 50c (National
 2 Apprenticeship Act). A school district may use the standard form established by the
 3 department under (b)(2) of this section to apply under this subsection.

4 (d) In this section, "program" means the teacher registered apprenticeship
 5 program.

6 **Sec. 14.20.710. Teacher recruitment and retention fund.** (a) The teacher
 7 recruitment and retention fund is established in the general fund for the purpose of
 8 providing grants under (b) of this section. The fund consists of money appropriated to
 9 it by the legislature, including grants and donations, money from other sources, and
 10 interest earned on money in the fund. Appropriations to the fund do not lapse.

11 (b) Money in the fund may be appropriated for the department to provide
 12 grants to nonprofit organizations that advance recruitment and retention efforts in the
 13 state and to provide grants to school districts for the school districts to design,
 14 develop, implement, or fund

- 15 (1) teacher registered apprenticeship programs;
- 16 (2) teacher residency programs;
- 17 (3) alternative pathway programs;
- 18 (4) student loan repayment;
- 19 (5) housing stipends;
- 20 (6) cost of living subsidies;
- 21 (7) recruitment bonuses;
- 22 (8) longevity bonuses;
- 23 (9) mentorship coaching;
- 24 (10) teacher training;
- 25 (11) professional development for superintendents, principals, and
 26 other school administrators;
- 27 (12) continuing education; and
- 28 (13) other programs approved by the department that are likely to
 29 improve teacher recruitment and reduce teacher turnover.

30 (c) The department shall

- 31 (1) apply for and use funds from the fund to obtain private and federal

1 grants for the purposes under AS 14.20.700 and this section;

2 (2) help school districts complete grant applications for a grant under
3 (b) of this section;

4 (3) award grants under (b) of this section based on a scoring matrix
5 established by the department in regulation; the scoring matrix must give the most
6 weight to applications from school districts that

7 (A) have the greatest need for a grant; and

8 (B) will use the grant money for purposes that most greatly
9 benefit student performance through improved teacher recruitment and
10 retention rates.

11 (d) The department may require that a school district provide matching funds
12 for the implementation and operation of the program for which the school district
13 requests the grant. The matching funds may come from private sources, including a
14 corporation organized under 43 U.S.C. 1601 et seq. (Alaska Native Claims Settlement
15 Act).

16 (e) The department shall, after each award cycle, provide to each school
17 district a copy of each grant application that resulted in an award of a grant under (b)
18 of this section for the purpose of spreading innovative ideas across the state.

19 (f) In this section, "fund" means the teacher recruitment and retention fund.

20 * **Sec. 11.** AS 37.05.146(c) is amended by adding a new paragraph to read:

21 (80) the teacher recruitment and retention fund under AS 14.20.710.

22 * **Sec. 12.** AS 14.16.050(a)(3)(C); AS 14.20.022(c), and 14.20.220 are repealed.

23 * **Sec. 13.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
24 read:

25 REPORT ON STUDY OF TEACHER HOUSING NEEDS. The Department of
26 Education and Early Development shall conduct a study that assesses the needs for teacher
27 housing in rural areas of the state. The study must include a projection of future teacher
28 housing needs in rural areas of the state, a plan to meet those needs, and identification of the
29 annual appropriations required to satisfy the identified needs. The Department of Education
30 and Early Development shall collaborate with the Department of Labor and Workforce
31 Development to determine the projection of future teacher housing needs as part of the study.

1 The Department of Education and Early Development shall collaborate with the Alaska
2 Housing Finance Corporation and school districts in the state to develop the plan to meet the
3 needs for teacher housing identified in the study. Not later than December 31, 2023, the
4 Department of Education and Early Development shall submit a report on the study to the
5 senate secretary and chief clerk of the house of representatives and notify the legislature that
6 the report is available.