

STATE OF ALASKA THE LEGISLATURE

2006

Source

HCS CSSCR 28(HES)

**Legislative
Resolve No.**

43



Relating to the innovative application of education technology tools to provide improved distance education programs in the state.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

WHEREAS education technology is rapidly developing to provide managed student access to unprecedented arrays of information on the Internet, including curricula, resource and reference materials, search engines, world news, communication, calculations, tables, definitions, and all student records; and

WHEREAS education technology is rapidly developing to economically provide powerful teaching tools that are capable of generating individualized student learning plans, supplemental and tutorial services, evaluations, communications, assignments, and learning problem diagnostics that can be available on the Internet at any time, from any place in the world, from any computer; and

WHEREAS education excellence is attainable by using a curriculum that encourages student discovery, innovation, and proficiency as ways to avoid merely teaching to the test and to prevent student boredom and teacher burnout; and

WHEREAS, according to a 2003 United States Bureau of the Census report, the state

leads the nation at 68.5 percent of our households connected to the Internet; and

WHEREAS the federal, state, and local contributions averaged \$10,114 for each student enrolled in the state during the 2003-2004 school year; and

WHEREAS the state has the highest median cost for each student in the nation at \$16,665, reflecting the high cost of education in rural Alaska; and

WHEREAS 37 percent of Alaska schools have less than 100 students, and 24 percent have less than 50 students, with many of the schools located in remote, rural settings; and

WHEREAS the results of the 2003 National Assessment of Education Progress, which is the state's only national and ongoing assessment of student reading and mathematics performance, reveals that performance is only at about 30 percent proficiency, which is at, or below, the national average; and

WHEREAS increasing demands have been placed on rural education programs in the state by the federal No Child Left Behind Act, including employment of highly qualified teachers, provision of supplemental services, and the requirement to restructure districts and to offer parental choice options; and

WHEREAS rural education challenges in the state include

- (1) high teacher turnover rates;
- (2) high costs of teacher housing;
- (3) cultural differences between teachers and rural communities;
- (4) the need to group a small number of students in small schools into 13 grade, ability, and interest levels;
- (5) the difficulty of meeting the needs of isolated students with special needs and gifts; and
- (6) the difficulty of providing special interest curriculum such as Native language education; and

WHEREAS public school facilities, employment needs, and related economic considerations are valued critical components of rural Alaska communities; and

WHEREAS the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development has continued to improve statewide assessment tools in response to legislative intent that provides an increasingly reliable measure of K-12 proficiency;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature encourages the innovative and

responsible application of education technology tools to improve distance education programs that will enhance rural education in the state; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature encourages local school boards and administrators to look for ways to regroup rural students, especially those in small schools, into virtual educational program groups selected for efficiency, skill and age level, and student and parent interest, and to use educational technology to provide quality teachers for these groups from a distance; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature encourages local school boards and administrators to provide the restructuring, choice, and supplemental services required for schools failing to achieve Annual Yearly Progress under the federal No Child Left Behind Act and state law, and to improve student proficiency as measured by the National Assessment of Education Progress; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature encourages reallocation of savings available from the efficiencies of scale from regrouping of students across rural boundaries to help pay for the application of educational technology while ensuring that rural remote school facilities and local employees are retained in the process; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature requests local school boards and administrators to apply for the grants available under AS 14.14.115 as a means of installing education technology; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature requests superintendents of public school districts to distribute copies of this resolution to each member of the district's school board.

COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to Al Weinberg, Superintendent, Alaska Gateway School District; Joe Beckford, Chief School Administrator, Aleutian Region School District; Dennis Maasjo, Superintendent, Aleutians East Borough School District; Carol Comeau, Superintendent, Anchorage School District; Brett Agenbroad, Superintendent, Annette Island School District; John Davis, Superintendent, Bering Strait School District; Richard Hebhardt, Superintendent, Bristol Bay Borough School District; Vance Cortez-Rucker, Superintendent, Chatham School District; Bob Crumley, Superintendent, Chugach School District; James Elliot, Superintendent, Copper River School District; Don Clark, Superintendent, Cordova City School District; Ron Erickson, Superintendent, Craig City

School District; Dan Beck, Superintendent, Delta/Greely School District; Dale Olson, Superintendent, Denali Borough School District; Arnold Watland, Superintendent, Dillingham City School District; Ann E. Shortt, Superintendent, Fairbanks School District; Jim Smith, Superintendent, Galena City School District; Woody Wilson, Superintendent, Haines Borough School District; Howard Diamond, Superintendent, Hoonah City School District; Bill Raduenz, Superintendent, Hydaburg City School District; Joe Banghart, Superintendent, Iditarod Area School District; Peggy Cowan, Superintendent, Juneau Borough School District; Eric Gebhart, Superintendent, Kake City School District; Gary Stevens, Superintendent, Kashunamiut School District; Donna Peterson, Superintendent, Kenai Peninsula Borough School District; Harry Martin, Superintendent, Ketchikan Gateway Borough School District; Richard Carlson, Superintendent, Klawock City School District; Betty Walters, Superintendent, Kodiak Island Borough School District; Marty Laster, Superintendent, Kuspuk School District; Steve Atwater, Chief School Administrator, Lake and Peninsula School District; William Ferguson, Superintendent, Lower Kuskokwim School District; John Lamont, Superintendent, Lower Yukon School District; Robert Doyle, Chief School Administrator, Mat-Su Borough Schools; Robert Thomason, Superintendent, Nenana City Schools; Stan Lujan, Superintendent, Nome Public Schools; Trent Blankenship, Superintendent, North Slope Borough Schools; Norman Eck, Superintendent, Northwest Arctic Borough Schools; Connie A. Newman, Superintendent, Pelican City Schools; Gary Jacobsen, Superintendent, Petersburg City Schools; Malcolm Fleming, Superintendent, Pribilof Schools; David Herbert, Superintendent, Saint Mary's Schools; Steve Bradshaw, Superintendent, Sitka Borough Schools; Michael Dickens, Superintendent, Skagway City Schools; Jim Nygaard, Superintendent, Southeast Island Schools; Jack Foster, Superintendent, Southwest Region Schools; Dorothy Jordan, Superintendent, Tanana Schools; Darrell Sanborn, Superintendent, Unalaska City Schools; Lance Bowie, Superintendent, Valdez City Schools; Susan Sciabbarrasi, Superintendent, Wrangell City Schools; Timothy MacDonald, Superintendent, Yakutat City Schools; Linda Evans, Superintendent, Yukon Flats Schools; Christopher Simon, Superintendent, Yukon/Koyukuk Schools; Joe Slats, Chief School Administrator, Yupiit Schools; Bill Denkinger, Director, Mt. Edgecumbe High School; and the Honorable Ted Stevens and the Honorable Lisa Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.