

HOUSE BILL NO. 358

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVE ELAM

Introduced: 2/23/26

Referred: Education, Labor and Commerce

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 **"An Act establishing the career and technical education mobility grant program;**
2 **relating to pre-apprenticeship and work-based learning opportunities for secondary**
3 **school students; and providing for an effective date."**

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

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

6 (a) The department shall

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

9 (2) study the conditions and needs of the public schools of the state,
10 adopt or recommend plans, administer and evaluate grants to improve school
11 performance awarded under AS 14.03.125, and adopt regulations for the improvement
12 of the public schools; the department may consult with the University of Alaska to
13 develop secondary education requirements to improve student achievement in college
14 preparatory courses;

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

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

6 (5) establish, in coordination with the Department of Family and
7 Community Services, a program for the continuing education of children who are held
8 in juvenile detention facilities or juvenile treatment facilities, as those terms are
9 defined in AS 47.12.990, in the state during the period of detention or treatment;

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

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

21 (8) exercise general supervision over early education programs that
22 receive direct state or federal funding, including early education programs provided by
23 a school district for students four and five years of age, approve an early education
24 program provided by a school district that complies with the standards adopted by the
25 board under AS 14.07.165(a)(5), and revoke approval of an early education program if
26 the program does not comply with the standards adopted by the board under
27 AS 14.07.165(a)(5);

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

1 (10) accredit private schools that request accreditation and that meet
2 accreditation standards prescribed by regulation by the department; nothing in this
3 paragraph authorizes the department to require religious or other private schools to be
4 licensed;

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1 arts and mathematics, as provided in AS 14.03.123(f)(1)(A); and

2 (C) a process for districts to petition the department for
3 continuing or discontinuing the department's intervention;

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

7 (18) establish a reading program to provide direct support for and
8 intervention in the reading intervention programs of participating schools as described
9 in AS 14.30.765 and 14.30.770;

10 (19) annually convene, either in person or electronically, a panel to
11 review and comment on the effectiveness of the programs created by the department
12 and the regulations adopted by the board to implement AS 14.03.410, 14.03.420,
13 AS 14.30.760 - 14.30.770, and 14.30.800; the panel

14 (A) shall provide recommendations and guidance to the board,
15 the department, and the legislature on how to integrate early education and
16 reading programs created under this title with tribal compacting or programs
17 focused on cultural education within the department;

18 (B) shall discuss support for reading in Alaska Native
19 languages and other non-English languages;

20 (C) must collectively represent the regions of the state and
21 include teachers of grades kindergarten through three, school administrators,
22 parents of students in grades kindergarten through three, stakeholders from
23 Indigenous language immersion programs, representatives from early
24 education stakeholder groups, and researchers of best practices for improving
25 literacy performance, including best practices for instruction of Indigenous
26 students and students whose first language is not English;

27 **(20) collaborate with the Department of Labor and Workforce**
28 **Development under AS 44.31.020 to identify and expand pre-apprenticeship and**
29 **work-based learning opportunities for secondary school students, using existing**
30 **workforce or training programs where practicable.**

31 * **Sec. 2.** AS 14.07.020(a), as amended by sec. 16, ch. 40, SLA 2022, is amended to read:

1 (a) The department shall

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

4 (2) study the conditions and needs of the public schools of the state,
5 adopt or recommend plans, administer and evaluate grants to improve school
6 performance awarded under AS 14.03.125, and adopt regulations for the improvement
7 of the public schools; the department may consult with the University of Alaska to
8 develop secondary education requirements to improve student achievement in college
9 preparatory courses;

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

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

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

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

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

30 (8) exercise general supervision over early education programs that
31 receive direct state or federal funding, including early education programs provided by

1 a school district for students four and five years of age;

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

6 (10) accredit private schools that request accreditation and that meet
7 accreditation standards prescribed by regulation by the department; nothing in this
8 paragraph authorizes the department to require religious or other private schools to be
9 licensed;

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

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

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

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

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

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

31 (A) a notice provision that alerts the district to the deficiencies

1 and the instructional practice changes proposed by the department;

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

7 (C) a process for districts to petition the department for
8 continuing or discontinuing the department's intervention;

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

12 **(18) collaborate with the Department of Labor and Workforce**
13 **Development under AS 44.31.020 to identify and expand pre-apprenticeship and**
14 **work-based learning opportunities for secondary school students, using existing**
15 **workforce or training programs where practicable.**

16 * **Sec. 3.** AS 14.30 is amended by adding a new section to read:

17 **Article 17. Career and Technical Education Mobility Grant Program.**

18 **Sec. 14.30.810. Statewide career and technical education mobility grant**
19 **program.** (a) The statewide career and technical education mobility grant program is
20 established in the department to encourage participation in career and technical
21 education programs by facilitating students who are enrolled in one school district to
22 participate in career and technical education programs offered by a different school
23 district. Grants awarded under this section are subject to appropriation. If insufficient
24 money is appropriated to fully fund the program, the department shall prioritize
25 awarding funding to host districts with small student populations, with limited
26 capacity to deliver a career and technical education program, or where distance, lack
27 of road access, seasonal travel limitations, or reliance on air or ferry transportation
28 materially increase the cost or time required for students to participate in career and
29 technical education programs.

30 (b) The department may award to a host district a grant to reimburse the
31 district for the incremental, student-specific, or participation-specific expenses the

1 district incurs by providing career and technical education to students enrolled in a
 2 different school district. Allowable uses of grant funds distributed under this
 3 subsection include program-specific infrastructure and equipment improvements
 4 necessary to accommodate additional students. Funding awarded under this subsection
 5 may not exceed the amount awarded to the school district for performance-based
 6 incentive grants under (c) of this section.

7 (c) The department may award to a host district a performance-based incentive
 8 grant. The department may not adopt a regulation that caps the total amount of a grant
 9 that may be awarded under this subsection. In determining whether to award a grant to
 10 a host district under this subsection, the department shall consider

11 (1) measurable outcomes of the host district's career and technical
 12 education program, including whether the program

13 (A) results in a student gaining a certification;

14 (B) includes apprenticeships or direct-to-employment
 15 placements;

16 (C) allows a student to earn both high school and college
 17 credit; and

18 (D) measures a student's demonstrated improvement in

19 (i) academic skills that directly support workforce
 20 participation and technical skill development; or

21 (ii) foundational academic areas, including general
 22 academic engagement and attendance, when those improvements are
 23 reasonably related to participation in a career and technical education
 24 program;

25 (2) the number of students in the host district's career and technical
 26 education program who achieve measurable outcomes such as earning a certification,
 27 earning dual high school and college credit, participating in an apprenticeship, or
 28 gaining employment in a field related to the student's career and technical education;
 29 and

30 (3) the percentage of students who are enrolled in the host district's
 31 career and technical education program who achieve a measurable outcome described

1 in (2) of this subsection.

2 (d) The department may award to a host district a facility and equipment
3 modernization grant to update or expand career and technical education facilities and
4 equipment. Allowable uses of grant funds distributed under this subsection include
5 facility safety and compliance upgrades that are required under state or federal law. In
6 determining whether to award a grant under this subsection, the department shall
7 prioritize grants for facilities or equipment that will be used by multiple school
8 districts and shall consider

9 (1) how and whether the host district's existing career and technical
10 education program uses the facilities or equipment;

11 (2) whether the host district's career and technical education program
12 meets relevant performance outcomes, as determined by the department; and

13 (3) whether the host district's career and technical program includes
14 apprenticeship agreements or industry partnerships.

15 (e) In implementing this section, the department shall try to minimize the
16 administrative burden placed on a host district by using existing reporting systems and
17 data sources when possible.

18 (f) The department shall adopt regulations necessary to implement this
19 section.

20 (g) In this section,

21 (1) "career and technical education" means classes or programs
22 designed to provide a student with technical skills, industry certifications, or
23 workforce preparation;

24 (2) "host district" means a school district providing career and
25 technical education to students enrolled in a different school district;

26 (3) "school district" means a municipal school district or a regional
27 educational attendance area.

28 * **Sec. 4.** AS 44.31.020 is amended to read:

29 **Sec. 44.31.020. Duties of department.** The Department of Labor and
30 Workforce Development shall

31 (1) enforce the laws and adopt regulations under them concerning

1 employer-employee relationships, including the safety, hours of work, wages, and
2 conditions of workers, including children;

3 (2) accumulate, analyze, and report labor statistics;

4 (3) operate systems of workers' compensation and unemployment
5 insurance;

6 (4) gather data reflecting the cost of living in various locations of the
7 state upon request of the director of personnel under AS 39.27.030;

8 (5) operate the federally funded employment and training programs
9 under 29 U.S.C. 2801 - 2945 (Workforce Investment Act of 1998);

10 (6) administer the state's program of adult basic education and adopt
11 regulations to administer the program;

12 (7) administer the programs of the Alaska Vocational Technical Center
13 and adopt regulations to administer the programs, including regulations that set rates
14 for student tuition and room and board and fees for the programs and services
15 provided by the department regarding the Alaska Vocational Technical Center; [AND]

16 (8) gather data on the progress of each high school graduating class in
17 a district by collecting career, postsecondary education, and residency data on each
18 student in the graduating class; the department shall gather the data required under this
19 paragraph every five years for 20 years after the high school graduation date of each
20 high school graduating class; the department shall publish a biennial report on the data
21 gathered under this paragraph; in this paragraph, "district" has the meaning given in
22 AS 14.17.990; **and**

23 **(9) collaborate with the Department of Education and Early**
24 **Development under AS 14.07.020 to identify and expand pre-apprenticeship and**
25 **work-based learning opportunities for secondary school students, using existing**
26 **workforce or training programs where practicable.**

27 * **Sec. 5.** Section 2 of this Act takes effect on the effective date of sec. 16, ch. 40, SLA
28 2022.