



THE STATE  
of **ALASKA**  
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

**Department of Education  
& Early Development**

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

333 Willoughby Ave., 9<sup>th</sup> Floor, SOB  
P.O. Box 110500  
Juneau, Alaska 99811-0500  
Main: 907.465.2800  
TTY/TDD: 907.465.2815  
Fax: 907.465.2806

May 4, 2026

The Honorable Rebecca Himschoot  
Co-Chair, House Education Committee  
Alaska State Capitol, Room 411  
Juneau, AK 99801

The Honorable Andi Story  
Co-Chair, House Education Committee  
Alaska State Capitol, Room 403  
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Co-Chair Himschoot and Co-Chair Story,

This letter serves as a response to questions addressed to the Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) at the Wednesday, April 29, 2026, House Education Committee meeting on the presentation of the Teacher Certification process.

**1. Is a background check needed for an emergency certification if the educator already holds a regular certification? An emergency certification from another district?**

No. A background check for an Emergency Certified Teacher is valid for two years. If the educator remains employed with the district into a third year under an Emergency Certificate, proof of continued employment may be used in place of a new background check.

**2. Verify how payments are received for the Reads Act endorsement. How much? Is there a larger amount charged (\$100) and then a reimbursement made for overpayment?**

The system is charging \$50 for the Reads Act Endorsement.

**3. Can a Type M certification be transferred to another district? What is the process? Will the educator have to go through the whole certification process?**

Type M certificates are district-sponsored and cannot be transferred between districts. The educator must surrender the existing certificate, and the hiring district submits a new application on their behalf. Because DEED already has transcripts and prior documentation on file and allows proof of employment to be used in place of a background check, the process is more streamlined than for a new applicant.

**4. What are the requirements for a teacher that retires in the spring and wants to go back to help the district in the fall? What is the waiting period? Are there any exceptions/waivers?**

Division of Retirement and Benefits can best answer this question, as this is a benefits question. There is a reemployment statute (<https://www.akleg.gov/basis/statutes.asp#14.25.043>) that provides options for hiring of retired teachers for hard to fill positions, but Retirement and Benefits can better speak to waiting periods, exceptions, and waivers.

**5. What is the duration of the Reads Act Endorsement classes? Is there a test educators are required to take?**

Earning the Alaska Reads Act Endorsement requires either 45 hours of DEED-approved professional development or qualifying scores on DEED-approved exams. ([DEED approved courses and exams](#))

Educators may take an approved exam to earn Alaska Reads Act Endorsement (see above). Courses approved for the Alaska Reads Act Endorsement include required pretests and posttests to measure learning. Participants must demonstrate mastery, typically earning a score of 80 percent or higher on assessments embedded within course units, such as those in the Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS) course.

Please don't hesitate to reach out with any additional questions.

Sincerely,



Deena Bishop, Ed.D.  
Commissioner

cc: Jordan Shilling, Legislative Director, Office of the Governor