

HB 78: Retirement Systems; Defined Benefit Option

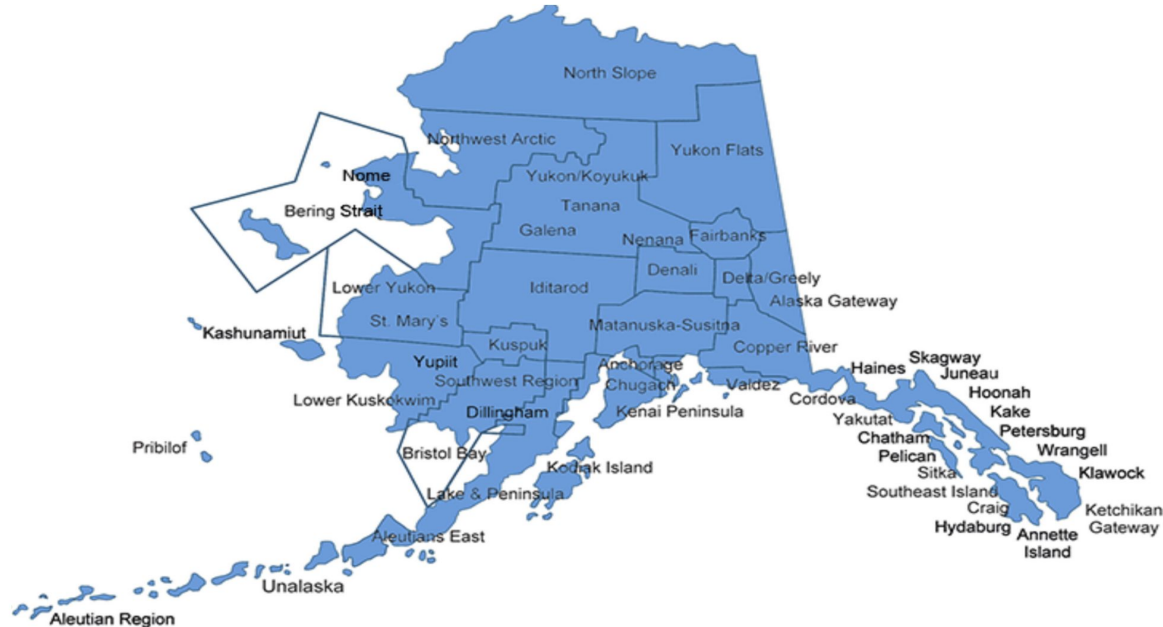
Alaska's Educator Recruitment and Retention Crisis



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Supporting Alaska's School Districts



The lack of a defined benefit retirement plan, coupled with the loss of competitive salaries and increased cost of living, prohibits educators from being able to afford pursuing a career in Alaska.



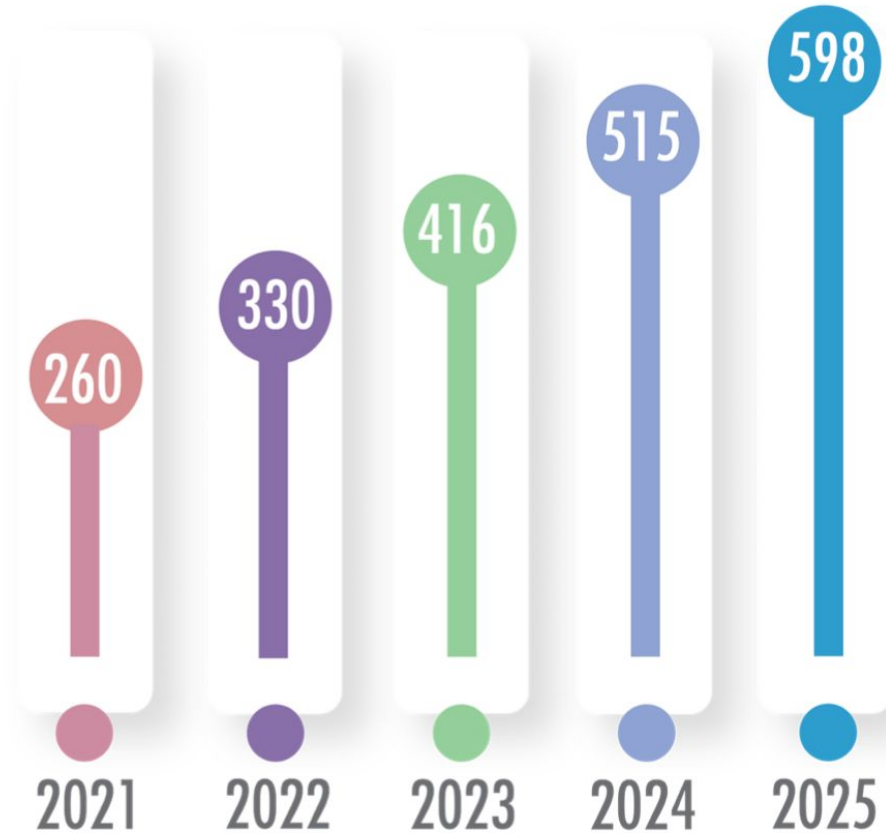
**ALASKA COUNCIL
OF SCHOOL
ADMINISTRATORS**

JOINT POSITION
STATEMENTS **2025**

**STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT IS OUR NUMBER
ONE PRIORITY.**


**SUSTAINABLE FUNDING REMAINS OUR
MOST CRITICAL NEED.**

AK First Day Certified Position Vacancy Rates



Alaska Educator Retention and Recruitment Center



TRR Implementation	Alaska Teacher and Personnel	International Hire Support
<p>AERRC is an outcome of Alaska's TRR Playbook to serve as the center for alignment across the education system. We aim to develop partnerships that expand the capacity to impact change. A central steering committee will foster collaborative solutions and strengthen the retention and recruitment efforts as outlined by the work stemming from the Governor's working group on TRR.</p> <p>TRR PLAYBOOK</p> 	<p>ACSA recently acquired AT&P from the University of Alaska. School districts contract with us to use the online hiring platform for posting jobs and finding candidates. Our services currently include hosting trainings and virtual job fairs throughout the year. Our team will offer continual support to districts throughout their recruiting and hiring processes.</p> <p>AT&P Job Platform (Applitrack)</p>	<p>With more international hiring happening in Alaska, ACSA is working with an immigration attorney in an effort to become the in-state agency that supports school districts with international hiring. Our plans include assisting with paperwork and hiring as well as offering onboarding and ongoing support to the educators while they are in Alaska. We will be doing this in partnership with the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce.</p>

How retirement benefits rank for educators

Table 1.2: Personal Importance Top 15 Rankings for Subgroups by Role.

Personal Importance Item	Total (N=4223)	Current Educator (N=2704)	Current Administrator (N=351)	Other (N=284)
adequate compensation for assigned duties (salary)	1	1	2	2
positive workplace conditions	2	2	3	1
personal connections with students	3	3	6	3
retirement benefits	4	4	1	6
good healthcare benefits	5	5	4	5

Source: TRR Survey Results prepared by DEED



How retirement benefits rank for educators

Table 2.1: Ranking of all 34 Solution Influence items from most important (1) to least (34).

Ranking	Solution Influence Items (Part 2)
1	competitive salary commensurate with cost of living
2	enhanced salary schedule (scale based on years of experience, etc.)
3	state goes back to a defined benefit retirement system
4	annual retention incentives
5	additional opportunities for salary advancement
6	improved healthcare in the state
7	contributing into social security
8	state moves to a hybrid retirement with personal and state investments
9	portability of my retirement savings
10	creating or strengthening webs of support (new hire walkthrough process, teaching support, community support, leadership support, etc.)

Source: TRR Survey Results prepared by DEED



Why are teachers leaving Alaska?

Top 4 Reasons

1. Lack of Defined Benefit
2. Better opportunities in the lower 48
3. Cost of living
4. Uncertainty of education funding



How does turnover harm student achievement?

In Alaska high teacher turnover correlated with poor student achievement

	Average Teacher Turnover	Average Percent of students scoring proficient in Reading
5 Lowest Turnover Districts	8.7%	85.8%
5 Highest Turnover Districts	37.9%	46.9%

The Impact of Teacher Turnover on Student Achievement

Veteran teachers continue to improve throughout their careers, even in their 15th or 20th year.

(National Bureau of Economic Research, 2023)

Higher turnover rates correlate with lower student achievement in both math and ELA.

(American Educational Research Association, 2013)

Professional Learning can improve student achievement and is effective for teachers at all career stages.

(Research Partnership for Professional Learning, 2022)

Educator Turnover

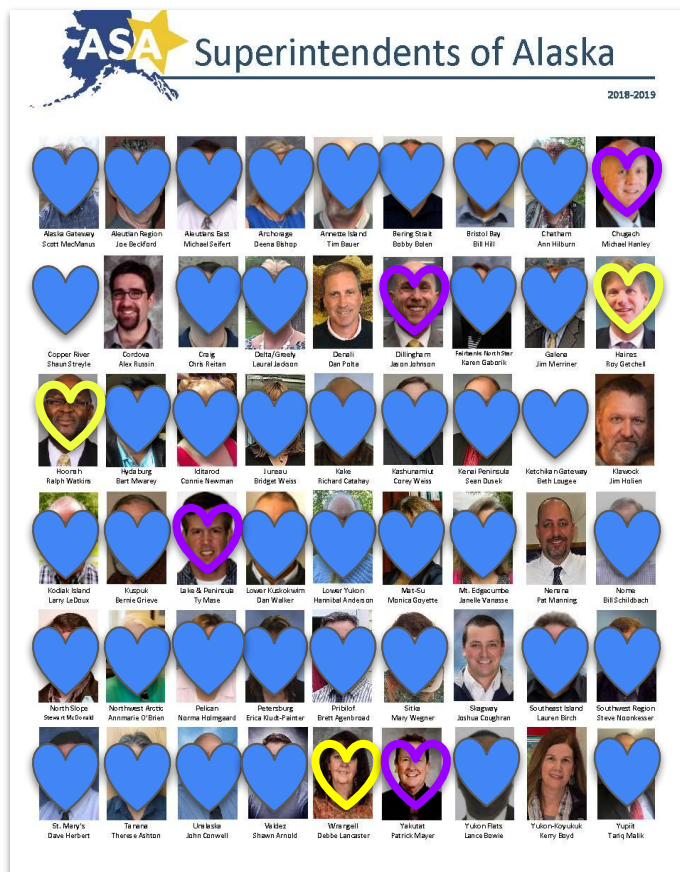
The PK-12 Instability
Equation

Superintendent
Turnover

+ Principal Turnover

+ Teacher Turnover

Instability



Other
states
know
Alaska isn't
competitive



Thinking of Teaching in Alaska? BEWARE

Alaska is the **ONLY** state in the nation that does not allow their teachers to participate in the National Social Security system, and yet provides no defined pension or benefit for their teachers with a start date after 2006. You will be unable to apply for National or State disability benefits or disability insurance if you can't work due to injury or disease.

As soon as you start teaching for Alaska any social security benefits you've accrued will be cut.
Windfall Elimination Act <https://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10045.pdf>

Any social security benefits your spouse has accrued will now not go to you if they die before you.
Government Pension Offset <https://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10007.pdf>

I taught in Alaska almost 10 years and when I got a terminal disease and called the AK Division of Retirement & Benefits for support I was told I can't even apply for a disability benefit and got a letter that finally told me the truth of my predicament:
"Since you are a Tier 3 member, you may only apply for an Occupational Disability and the benefit, should you be approved, is a monthly monetary benefit only. Your medical coverage will not become effective until you reach retirement age 65 and then, only if you have also accrued a minimum of 10 years of service. We look forward to working with you on your disability application.
Sincerely, Caleb Brown AK Retirement & Benefits Technician- Disability Unit

Don't take my word for it— do thorough research, You are Tier 3—Research "What's wrong with Tier 3 Teacher Retirement in Alaska". They want to keep hiring people without informing them of the broken system. I wasn't told the extent of the inhumanity until it was too late. I'm sharing in hopes no one else has to go through what I am.
https://www.newsminer.com/opinion/community_perspectives/we-re-hemorrhaging-teachers-how-alaska-s-broken-retirement-system-is-harming-students/article_20ce34d6-4997-11ec-85dd-7f9440f9fe19.html
<https://www.kpea-kpesa.org/article/house-bill-220-retirement-tier-iii-educators>
http://www.akleg.gov/basis/get_documents.asp?session=32&docid=77813



Friends don't let friends teach in Alaska

Solutions

Offering a defined benefits option to Alaska's Educators

- Will help close the gap in retention and in Alaska's School
- Will attract new teachers to the state



Thank you! Questions?

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Leadership, Unity, and Advocacy for Public Education



HAINES BOROUGH
SCHOOL DISTRICT

Dr. Roy Getchell

2024 Alaska Superintendent of the Year
ACSA/ASA Past-President
Superintendent,
Haines Borough School District