

# STATE OF ALASKA

## Department of Education & Early Development

### Office of the Commissioner

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March 23, 2010

The Honorable Bill Stoltze  
The Honorable Mike Hawker  
Co-Chairs, Finance Committee  
Alaska House of Representatives  
State Capitol, Room 515, 505  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Subject: CSHB297(EDC) – An Act establishing the governor’s performance scholarship program...

Dear Representatives Stoltze and Hawker:

During the committee’s initial hearing on CSHB297(EDC), members asked for additional information and clarification on relevant issues. The issues included:

**1. Provide correspondence school analysis offered by Commissioner LeDoux.**

23 out of 53 public school districts offer correspondences courses. Of those 23, ten offer correspondence courses on a statewide basis.

**2. How many schools do not currently offer the four years of math and science required in the GPS bill?**

#### School Course Offering Counts for Mathematics and Science

339 schools were considered because they enroll high school students.

- Offer less than four years of mathematics 33
  - 2 math courses 12
  - 3 math courses 21
- Offer less than four years of science 72
  - 2 science courses 31
  - 3 science courses 41

a) What is in place to help those schools?

Distance-delivered instruction has evolved dramatically in the last ten years as access to Internet technology and bandwidth have increased. Traditional distance delivery, where a lone student struggles on his/her own to learn complicated concepts with a book and a distantly connected adult proctor, is very rare. Today, a number of innovative program options and strategies are used by districts and colleges in Alaska to provide quality core and elective coursework for students. Strategies may include:

**Learning Centers:** Students using distance courses are commonly centralized into a learning center and actively supervised by a teacher who monitors course progress, learning focus, and technology utilization. Learning Center staff provide individual encouragement, instructional assistance and access to highly qualified teachers. Students are encouraged to work collaboratively and to assist one another.

**Access to Highly Qualified Teachers:** Some districts contract with off-site content teachers to provide remote assistance for students engaged in distance coursework. Students are encouraged to contact their assigned specialists as necessary. E-mail is usually the form of contact but voice contact is also common.

**Asynchronous Distance Learning:** Coursework that allows students to engage in high school or college-level learning activities at their own pace in any place that has Internet connectivity. While the quality of distance delivery options may vary, significant progress has been made to design and develop quality distance coursework. Many real-time options are embedded into distance delivery including interactive e-mail or voice discussions with other students or instructors. Asynchronous distance learning is popular in Alaska because it does not require extensive bandwidth to operate. Colleges and universities around the country are using this technology to offer college courses.

**Synchronous Distance Learning:** Synchronous learning connects teachers to students in real time through the use of internet-based, interactive videoconferencing. Synchronous learning technology allows students from multiple sites to receive instruction directly from a teacher. Some districts are even using this technology to teach band. While synchronous delivery holds real promise, it is limited in use because it is a heavy user of bandwidth and sensitive to inclement weather.

**Alternative Education Programming:** The sophistication of distance courseware has evolved to a point where many districts allow students in brick and mortar schools to select distance-learning courses as an alternative to classroom instruction.

Districts that provide asynchronous learning courseware for their students have several options to select courseware:

- District-designed
- State-approved distance delivery schools
- Commercial
- College and University

3. **Please speak to the reallocation of funding to districts in an effort to achieve the realignment of resources that would create the GPS curriculum, virtual school, etc.**

In Moore v. State of Alaska, Judge Gleason determined that districts do in fact have adequate resources to address students' educational needs. Districts will have to determine how to reallocate those resources in order to meet the scholarship program requirements.

Districts that offer distance options are responsible for the cost of the program. A number of commercial vendors are available. The vast majority of districts, if not all, support some form of distance delivery for students. The most commonly used correspondence vendors are Brigham Young University and University of Nebraska; both charge \$125 per credit hour. In addition, districts may contract with other Alaska districts to provide distance delivered courses.

4. **Does EED know how much work must be done technologically to deliver GPS curriculum?**

As part of a federal report for Title II, Part D, all districts reported by school the Internet access for their unduplicated number of instructional computers in spring of 2009, with updates in the fall 2010. This report shows that all districts' schools have computers with Internet connectivity listed as high speed. Two schools in the Aleutian Region school district have *only* computers with dial-up capability. All Alaska schools would have the ability to participate in distance education with their current Internet capability. It is important to note that there will be a four-year phase-in of the program's requirements. This will allow time for districts to implement delivery strategies.

Over twenty districts have videoconferencing available to each of their school sites. About a half dozen of these districts are offering synchronous classes taught by district staff including Aleutian East, Bering Strait, Kodiak, Kuspuk, Lower Kuskokwim, and Yukon-Koyukuk school districts. In addition, other school districts are offering online courses, mostly asynchronous, including Anchorage, Craig, Delta Greely, Kenai, Petersburg and Wrangell. Most districts offer CTE and dual-credit courses as needed. Commissioner LeDoux has spoken to nearly all Superintendents and each one believes that he or she can implement the required curriculum for this program.

5. **Explain how the residency requirements will work.**

An option for residency requirement could be phrased as follows:

For purposes of the program, a student

- (1) must have been physically present in this state for one year before claiming Alaska residency status that qualifies the student for the program;
- (2) does not forfeit Alaska residency status by traveling outside this state after graduation from high school if the student
  - (A) does not claim residency in another state; and
  - (B) at all times maintains an intent to remain in this state indefinitely.

6. **Why won't students be allowed to take the scholarship out of state if Alaska does not provide the training necessary?**

Currently the program goals do not provide for a student to attend school out-of-state with the Governor's Performance Scholarship. The goals of the Governor's Performance Scholarship include:

1. increasing high school graduation rates in the state;
2. improving academic performance of students in kindergarten through grade 12 in the state;
3. improving preparedness of Alaska students for postsecondary education;
4. improving the quality of the educational programs offered by high schools in the state;
5. increasing the scores of high school students in the state on college entrance examinations;
6. increasing job training opportunities in the state;
7. improving the postsecondary academic achievement and graduation rates of students in the state;
8. expanding the pool of high school students in the state who pursue postsecondary opportunities;
9. providing a rigorous curriculum in all high schools in the state;
10. increasing participation of Alaska high school students in Alaska postsecondary institutions.

**7. How will EED provide for extensions outside of military service?**

The extensions outside of military service will be regulated by the State Board of Education. The Department of Education and Early Development will recommend an appeal process that will take into consideration each student's specific circumstance.

**8. Members were seeking information on potential costs of CTE programs.**

The cost of attendance at career and technical schools varies considerably. The highest cost of tuition at AVTEC is \$5,000 for the Licensed Practical Nurse program (176 training days) and \$1,320 for the Certified Nurse Assistant (38 training days). The cost of tools for the Automotive Technology (197 training days) and the Diesel/Heavy Equipment (197 training days) programs are both higher than the cost of tuition. The tuition for the majority of programs at AVTEC are below \$3,000. Many of the programs at AVTEC are between 9-12 months. The scholarship program provides tuition for up to two years.

Students who qualify for one of the academic performance scholarships may carry that award to an approved technical school program. This is significant in that the majority of the career and technical school programs in Alaska are offered by the University of Alaska. Students who earn a career and technical scholarship may use it at the University of Alaska towards a program that leads to a certificate.

The unmet financial need proposed by the GPS will assist those students who qualify for a career and technical education GPS award and have unmet financial need. Unmet need includes the cost of room and board, tools and other costs of attendance.

**AVTEC Training Dates**

**Alaska Culinary Academy**

Professional Cooking & Baking, 210 training days

Offered 01/05/10 to 12/16/10, 08/16/10 to 06/30/11



#### Alaska Maritime Training Center Courses

‣ **Marine License Preparation - Master Mate**, 45 training days  
 of the Engine Department (QMED) Oiler, 60 training days  
 Offered 09/13/10 to 12/08/10

#### Allied Health Department - Anchorage Training Facility

‣ **Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA)**, 38 training days  
 Offered 01/04/10 to 02/26/10, 02/03/10 to 03/30/10, 03/08/10 to 04/28/10,  
 04/05/10 to 05/27/10, 05/05/10 to 06/29/10, 06/07/10 to 08/03/10, 07/12/10 to 09/01/10  
 ‣ **Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)**, 176 training days  
 Offered 01/04/10 to 11/18/10, 08/16/10 to 07/01/11

#### Applied Technologies Department

‣ **Automotive Technology**, 197 training days  
 Offered 01/05/10 to 12/17/10, 08/16/10 to 06/09/11  
 ‣ **Combination Welding**, 172 training days  
 Offered 01/25/10 to 12/17/10, 08/16/10 to 05/04/11  
 ‣ **Diesel/Heavy Equipment Technologies**, 197 training days  
 Offered 01/05/10 to 12/17/10, 08/16/10 to 06/09/11  
 ‣ **Industrial Electricity**, 197 training days  
 Offered 08/16/10 to 6/09/11  
 ‣ **Pipe Welding**, 75 training days  
 Offered 01/19/10 to 05/05/10, 09/01/10 to 12/17/10  
 ‣ **Power Plant Operation**, 40 training days  
 Offered 01/11/10 to 03/05/10, 03/17/10 to 05/11/10  
 ‣ **Structural Welding**, 97 training days  
 Offered 01/25/10 to 06/11/10, 08/16/10 to 01/17/11

#### Information Technology Department

‣ **Business & Office Technology**, 183 training days  
 Offered 01/05/10 to 12/17/10, 08/16/10 to 05/19/11  
 ‣ **Information Technology**, 188 training days  
 Offered 08/16/10 to 05/26/11  
 ‣ **Web Development Technology**, 188 training days  
 Offered 08/16/10 to 07/12/11

#### Building Trades Technology

‣ **Facility Maintenance Construction Trades**, 188 training days  
 Offered 08/16/10 to 05/26/11  
 ‣ **Plumbing & Heating**, 102 training days  
 Offered 01/05/10 to 05/28/10

#### AVTEC Training Cost \* Costs Effective July 1, 2009

Program	Tuition	Technology Fee <sup>1</sup>	Security Deposit	Student Service Fee*	Meal Plan <sup>4</sup>	Dormitory Fees	Dorm Security Deposit <sup>3</sup>	Books/Supplies <sup>2</sup> sold by AVTEC	Tools/Supplies Not sold by AVTEC	Total
Qualified Member of the Engine Department (QMED) Oiler	\$1,650	\$150	\$50	\$75	\$1,573	\$1,820	\$200	\$155	\$655	\$6,328
Marine License Preparation - Master Mate	\$1,650	\$150	\$50	\$75	\$1,086	\$1,260	\$200	\$302	N/A	\$4,773
Certified Nurse Assistant	\$1,320	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$580	N/A	\$1,900

Licensed Practical Nurse	\$5,000	\$150	\$50	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$360	N/A	\$5,560
Business & Office Technology	\$2,750	\$150	\$50	\$75	\$3,400	\$4,400	\$200	\$1,800	N/A	\$12,825
Information Technology	\$2,750	\$150	\$50	\$75	\$3,400	\$4,400	\$200	\$2,600	N/A	\$13,625
Web Development Technology	\$2,750	\$150	\$50	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$2,400	N/A	\$5,350
Professional Cooking & Baking	\$2,750	\$150	\$50	\$75	\$3,400	\$4,400	\$200	\$1,425	\$300	\$12,750
Automotive Technology	\$2,750	\$150	\$50	\$75	\$3,400	\$4,400	\$200	\$600	\$3,600	\$15,225
Diesel/Heavy Equipment Technologies	\$2,750	\$150	\$50	\$75	\$3,400	\$4,400	\$200	\$1,050	\$3,700	\$15,775
Industrial Electricity	\$2,750	\$150	\$50	\$75	\$3,400	\$4,400	\$200	\$950	\$2,300	\$14,275
Pipe Welding	\$1,650	\$150	\$50	\$75	\$1,700	\$2,100	\$200	\$570	\$700	\$7,195
Power Plant Operation	\$1,320	\$150	\$50	\$75	\$975	\$1,120	N/A	N/A	\$420	\$4,110
Structural Welding	\$2,200	\$150	\$50	\$75	\$1,700	\$2,200	\$200	\$920	\$600	\$8,095
Combination Welding	\$2,750	\$150	\$50	\$75	\$3,400	\$4,400	\$200	\$1,500	\$800	\$13,325
Facility Maintenance/Construction Trades	\$2,750	\$150	\$50	\$75	\$3,400	\$4,400	\$200	\$650	\$2,000	\$13,675
Plumbing & Heating	\$2,200	\$150	\$50	\$75	\$1,700	\$2,200	\$200	\$236	\$1,700	\$8,511

The Department of Labor and Workforce Development is happy to provide additional information as necessary.

9. Requested information on the Hathaway GED language.

**Hathaway GED Criteria**

A student who attended a Wyoming high school, did not graduate, took the GED, and whose class has graduated, may qualify for a Hathaway Scholarship. Below are ACT and GED score requirements for Hathaway Scholarships. Students below a 550 GED do not qualify for UW admission.

<b>Opportunity</b>	Minimum GED of 500, and minimum ACT of 19
<b>Performance</b>	Minimum GED of 540, and minimum ACT of 21
<b>Honors</b>	Minimum GED of 575, and minimum ACT of 25

10. Information on Mt. Edgecumbe's admission requirements.

**4 AAC 33.080. Admission to Mount Edgecumbe High School**

- The superintendent of Mount Edgecumbe High School shall appoint an admissions committee of at least three persons to make recommendations for students to be admitted to the school.
- A student residing in any school district in the state may submit to the admissions committee an application for admission to Mount Edgecumbe High School, on forms prescribed by the department, at the following address: Mount Edgecumbe High School, Admissions Committee, Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, 1330 Seward Avenue, Sitka, Alaska 99835.
- An application under (b) of this section must include statements by the student and the student's parent or guardian explaining why admission is sought and why the student should be accepted, a

copy of the student's school records, including attendance records, transcripts, and achievement test results, at least two recommendations from teachers or other adults who are not members of the student's family and who know the student well, and such other information as the admissions committee requests.

(d) The number of available openings at each grade level shall be established by the superintendent in advance of each semester, based upon the school's capacity, the number of returning students, and other relevant factors.

(e) The admissions committee shall recommend students for the available openings from among the applicants, and the superintendent shall make the final admissions decisions, based upon consideration of the following factors:

(1) the availability of a high school program in the student's home community adequate to meet the academic and social needs of the student;

(2) the degree to which the student is expected to benefit from the academic and social program at Mount Edgecumbe High School;

(3) the degree to which the student will bring background experiences, skills, and abilities that will enhance the diversity or academic potential of the student body;

(4) any particular school, family, or social situations that make the structured, residential setting of Mount Edgecumbe High School especially advisable for the student.

(f) Preference shall be given to students whose educational, emotional, or family requirements warrant attendance in a domiciliary environment.

(g) The admissions committee and superintendent may not discriminate in favor of or against any resident based on race, sex, creed, national origin, or location or type of residence in the state.

(h) Admissions at mid-semester may be made only upon consideration of the effects of transfer on the continuity of the student's education and on the Mount Edgecumbe High School program.

(i) Once admitted, a student may continue to attend Mount Edgecumbe High School from semester to semester until the student graduates, so long as the student remains in good standing under school rules governing academic and social performance.

I hope that this information is helpful to the committee. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,



Larry LeDoux  
Commissioner