



Representative Chris Tuck

Alaska State Legislature

District 29 - Representing Dimond Estates, Foxridge, Taku, Southwood Manor, Campbell, and Independence Park

HB 69 (EDC) – Alaska Parents as Teachers Act Sponsor Statement

Parents are a child's first and most important teachers. HB 69, the Alaska Parents as Teachers Act, will empower parents with knowledge and resources to help their children develop into successful students with stronger scholastic achievements.

HB 69 allows the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to offer the successful Parents as Teachers early childhood learning methodology as an education option for families with children ages 0-5. Parents who choose to participate are supported by local child development specialists.

Parents as Teachers is completely voluntary for families, and seeks to maximize public-private resources and federal funds to augment state support.

Parents as Teachers is the most cost-effective early education model available in Alaska. In-home education by parents is far less expensive than traditional educational efforts that require building construction and student transportation. Further, Parents as Teachers works for those parents who do not have the desire or family resources to enroll their children into school-based early education programs.

Funds invested in early education pay dividends in the long run. Research shows that children who receive early education earn more money as adults than their peers lacking early education. Children who receive early education also enter the job market in much larger numbers, obtain college education in higher numbers, remain off public assistance in greater numbers, and remain out of jail in much greater numbers.

Every parent has the same desire to see their children receive the foundations for successes. Yet, Alaska fails to offer such opportunities. An April 2009 Rutgers University study, "The State of Preschool 2008," confirmed Alaska still ranks last in the nation in providing early education help to families.

Alaska's children are our future workforce, and the key to our state's prosperity. Alaska's plumbers, doctors and teachers of tomorrow are the youth in our neighborhoods today. Helping parents boost the skills and natural ingenuity of their children will point the way to Alaska's growth.

Parents as Teachers enjoys statewide support and will help grow stronger Alaskan families, better students and safer communities. It is a proven successful solution for our children and our state's future.

Please contact my office if you have questions, or would like more background information.

Thank you for your support of HB69, the Alaska Parents as Teachers Act.

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