

Questions from the June 3rd House Education Committee Meeting submitted to the Department of Education and Early Development by Chair Gattis.

Please note that ALL parenthetical notations are my own (James Ellis) personal thoughts relating to the questions.

- 1) Anchorage has adopted CCSS, have they received Race to the Top funds?
- 2) Are there any advantages/disadvantages to districts that adopt CCSS and can they un-adopt CCSS?
- 3) What tests other than Smarter Balance are available to us?
- 4) Rep. Saddler asked how many states are advisory to the Smarter Balance Consortium.
- 5) Rep. Keller asked how much responsibility DEED has for educational results (I think this was answered in committee).
- 6) Barbara Haney asked about the AACP funding and ties to WestEd.
- 7) Rep. Reinbold asked how we can be sure that we do not become entangled due to federal funds being used in Smarter Balance.
- 8) Rep. Seaton asked how our new standards “narrowed” (became more focused?)
- 9) Rep Seaton asked how additions to new Alaskan standards that are beyond the CCSS standards are assessed during testing.
- 10) Rep. Seaton asked if the department had considered the use of mini-servers to help administer online testing in remote areas or those with limited bandwidth.
- 11) Rep. Tammie Wilson asked how tests aimed at assessing CCSS can be accurate when Alaska also teaches other materials.
- 12) Rep. Tammie Wilson asked who is responsible for setting cut-scores for the Smarter Balance assessment.
- 13) Rep. Peggy Wilson inquired about the types of questions asked in the Smarter Balance assessment and if they included any personal questions. (Is it possible for the Education Committee to see a copy of the assessment either online or in paper copy?)
- 14) Rep. Peggy Wilson asked if the State of Alaska had any control over what personal questions or data are collected with the Smarter Balance assessments.

- 15) Rep. Peggy Wilson asked if there was any advantage to using more rigorous educational standards when many schools were having trouble meeting the older, less strict, standards.
- 16) Rep. Peggy Wilson asked how the Department ensured that school districts do their job.
- 17) Mike Coons asked why the Governor and the Department was letting groups associated with the CCSS have any influence on our standards when they have ties to controversial figures such as Bill Ayers.
- 18) Sandi Williams was concerned about how rigorous Alaska's new standards are for history and the U.S. Constitution and whether there are any state standards on those topics. She also expressed concern over who was involved in formulating the Smarter Balance assessments.
- 19) Rep. Hughes asked that people's concerns with who wrote the CCSS standards be directly addressed.
- 20) Rep. Hughes asked that the Department clearly delineate the changes that were made to the CCSS standards to make the new Alaska state standards.
- 21) Rep. Hughes wanted to know what personal information about students would be collected and how what Alaska will collect will differ from other states that adopted the CCSS.
- 22) Rep. Hughes asked what decisions have been made on who will score the assessments given to Alaskan students through Smarter Balance.
- 23) Rep. Hughes asked what commitments/measures have been taken to ensure that the data on Alaskan students is protected.
- 24) Barbara Haney voiced her strong concern for the groups working with the Smarter Balance people. (I believe the thrust of her question is how can we use their assessment while ensuring they do not unduly influence Alaskan education.)
- 25) Lori Kappenberg asked how it was decided to become involved with anything relating to the CCSS and who made the choice to do it. She also mentioned concern that the Mat-Su school district was looking at CCSS (is there any list of what districts are considering using anything besides the new Alaskan standards?)