

Alaska State Legislature

Senate Education Committee

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CS for Sponsor Substitute for Senate Bill 6 (EDU) Alaska Reads Act

SECTIONAL ANALYSIS

(Version G)

- Sec. 1: Assigns a title to the act as the Alaska Reads Act.
- Sec. 2: AS 14.03.060(e) Is amended to recognize the inclusion of early education programs as being part of an elementary school, specifically head start programs, at the approval of the Department of Education and Early Development (DEED).
- Sec. 3: AS 14.03.072(a) is amended to include a requirement for school districts to inform parents specifically of reading intervention services that are offered.
- Sec. 4: AS 14.03.078(a), relating to school districts' requirement to provide annual progress reports to DEED, is amended to include data for K-3 students involved in the AK Reads Act as described below in Section 7, as well as including data relating to:
- (8) how districts are using their in-service days for professional development; and
 - (9) the use and efficacy of the Parents as Teachers program as described in Section 8, below.
- Sec. 5: AS 14.03.080(d), relating to minimum school age, sets June 1 as the new date by which a student must be age 5 in order to enter kindergarten the following Fall term. This subsection also allows for a waiver for a child to enter kindergarten earlier than age 5 if they pass an approved exam.
- Sec. 6: AS 14.03.080(g) is a new subsection establishing that a four or five-year-old, who has not attended kindergarten, is eligible to attend a public Pre-K program.
- Sec. 7: AS 14.03.120(h) is added to establishes annual reporting requirements for school districts regarding student performance metrics in grades K-3. This includes data for the number

and percentage of students in K-3 who are proficient at grade level reading, and are retained from advancing to their next grade level for cause.

Sec. 8: AS.03.410 is created to codify a state Pre-K program, providing a stair-step, three-year grant program to provide training and assistance to low-performing school districts in developing their local Pre-K program. Over six fiscal years, all school districts are offered the opportunity to participate.

14.03.420 codifies the Parents As Teachers (PAT) program as a program of the state within DEED and specifies criteria for PAT to demonstrate its efficacy in supporting school districts with Pre-K education.

Sec. 9: 14.07.020(a), relating to the duties of DEED, is amended to add its general supervision over Pre-K programs in the state. This section also adds the DEED duty of (18) establishing a state reading and reading intervention program as described in Section 18, below.

Sec. 10: AS 14.07.020(c), relating to the definition of “early education program” to mean an educational program for children ages 3 to 5. The 3-year-old students are not included in the program this bill proposes but are included in the statute to ensure they are not excluded from existing State and Federal programs.

Sec. 11: AS 14.07.050, relating to locally-decided selection of textbooks, allows DEED to make textbook selections for reading material related to reading intervention programs described in Section 18, below.

Sec. 12: AS 14.07.165(a), relating to the duties of the state board of education and early development (Board), adds to those duties a requirement to establish regulations for Pre-K standards, and Pre-K teacher certification requirements.

Sec. 13: AS 14.17.500, relating to calculating a school district’s average daily membership (ADM) for budgeting purposes, adds (d) to specify a Pre-K student is counted as a half-time student.

Sec. 14: AS 14.17.905(a), relating to counting the number of schools in a district, is amended to include Pre-K students as being part of an elementary school, and provides for an exception as described in Section 15, below.

Sec. 15: AS 14.17.905, relating to counting the number of schools in a district, adds (d) to avoid letting school districts count Pre-K students twice in Foundation Formula ADM calculations. In other words, Foundation funding would only be provided to those districts that are not already being funded by another state or federal Pre-K program.

Sec. 16: AS 14.20.015(c), relating to teaching certificate reciprocity for teachers moving to Alaska from out-of-state, adds that such teachers must complete additional reading instruction

training in order to be eligible for an Alaska teaching endorsement in elementary education.

Sec. 17: AS 14.20.020, relating to general issuance of teacher certificates, adds (l), that all teachers must complete additional reading instruction training in order to be eligible for an endorsement in elementary education.

Sec. 18: AS 14.30 is amended to add Article 15, creating a Statewide Reading Intervention Program.

AS 14.30.760 Directs DEED to establish a statewide reading assessment and screening tool to identify students with reading deficiencies; assist teachers in monitoring student progress in reading proficiency, and provide training to teachers in reading intervention tools.

AS 14.30.765 District Reading Intervention Services must be offered by districts for K-3 students exhibiting a reading deficiency, and be implemented in a manner to include a high amount of communication between teachers, parents, administrators and the student. Considerable detailed attention is given under this section for instances when a student failing to progress toward reading proficiency can result in being withheld from advancing to the next grade level.

AS 14.30.770 Directs DEED to establish a statewide reading program, specifically to assist school districts in a variety of ways to affect the reading intervention services described in AS 14.30.665, above. DEED shall employ and deploy reading specialists to districts, in addition to making complementary tools and resources to districts in addressing student reading proficiency.

AS 14.30.775 aligns use of the word “district” in this Act with the definitions given elsewhere in statute when referring to a school district.

Sec. 19: AS 47.17.290(12), relating to the Dept. of Health and Social Services (HSS), child protection, includes “early education” (Pre-K) program staff as an “organization” required to report any sign of child abuse or neglect.

Sec. 20: AS 14.03.410, relating to the Pre-K grant program described in Section 8 above, once all school districts have had the opportunity to participate, is repealed July 1, 2031.

Sec. 21: Is transition language, directing DEED to use 2018-19 school accountability rankings for purposes of determining the first cohort of lowest performing schools, to identify their Pre-K grant eligibility for FY 21.

Sec. 22: Sets an effective date of July 1, 2020.