

# Special Education Funding, Population Data, and Teacher Skill Set

Alaska Department of Education and Early Development

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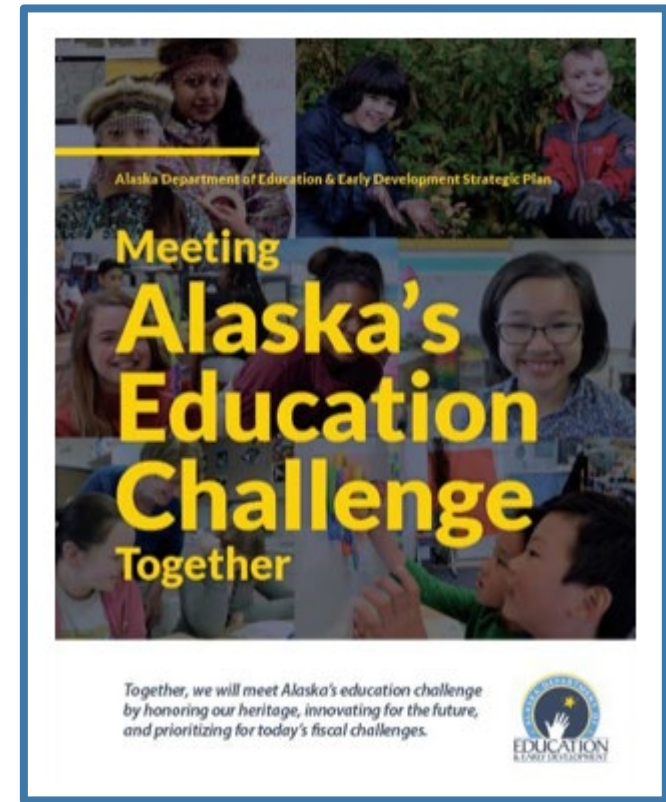
# Mission, Vision, and Purpose

Mission	Vision	Purpose
An excellent education for every student every day.	All students will succeed in their education and work, shape worthwhile and satisfying lives for themselves, exemplify the best values of society, and be effective in improving the character and quality of the world about them. - Alaska Statute 14.03.015	DEED exists to provide <b>information, resources, and leadership</b> to support an excellent education for every student every day.

# Strategic Priorities: Alaska's Education Challenge

## Five Shared Priorities:

1. Support all students to read at grade level by the end of third grade.
2. Increase career, technical, and culturally relevant education to meet student and workforce needs.
3. Close the achievement gap by ensuring equitable educational rigor and resources.
4. Prepare, attract, and retain effective education professionals.
5. Improve the safety and well-being of students through school partnerships with families, communities, and tribes.



[education.alaska.gov/akedchallenge](https://education.alaska.gov/akedchallenge)

# Agenda

- Funding for Special Education
- Intensive Funding
- Special Education Specific Questions addressed
- Special Education Teacher Skills
- District Support for Low Incident Disabilities

# Foundation Funding for Special Education

## Eligibility of Special Needs Students for State Foundation Funding:

- A child with a disability and an active Individualized Education Program (IEP) may attend school if at the age of 3 or if under the age of 22 by July 1 (AS 14.30.180(1))
- Special needs funding includes special education, vocational education, gifted/talented and bilingual/bicultural; these are block funded at 20% (AS 14.17.420 (a)(1))
- Special needs funding applies to all students except correspondence program students

# Foundation Funding for Intensive Services

## Eligibility of Intensive Services for State Foundation Funding:

A school district will receive funding for intensive services students that:

1. Are receiving intensive services (4 AAC 52.700);
2. Enrolled on the **last day** of the 20-school-day count period (AS 14.17.420(b)(2));  
and
3. Meet intensive qualifications for each intensive services student (4 AAC 09.015).

Eligible intensive services students will be multiplied by 13 for Foundation funding (AS 14.17.420) .

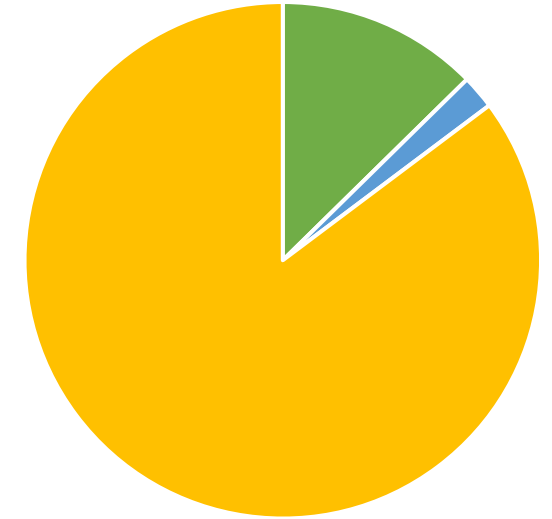
All intensive services students receive Foundation funding including correspondence program students.

# Special Needs Students Being Served (by School Year)

Count for Special Education (2023-2024): **19,391**

Count for Intensives (2023-2024): **3,243**

State Total Count of All Students (2023-2024): **130,733**



*Note: This information is pending posting to the Department of Education and Early Development's website.*

# Special Skills/Tools/Curricula to Serve Special Needs Students

- Serving special needs students requires a specific set of skills and tools to ensure that they receive the education and support needed to succeed.
- Services range for the individual student needs significantly, however a special education teacher certification is required in all cases.



# Special Education Teacher Skills

## **Knowledge of Special Education Laws and Regulations:**

Special Education Teachers should have a good understanding of federal and state laws and regulations governing special education, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

## **Differentiated Instruction:**

Special Education Teachers should be skilled in differentiating instruction to meet the needs of students with diverse learning abilities, including those with learning disabilities, autism spectrum disorders, and other developmental disabilities.

## **Classroom Management:**

Managing a classroom that includes students with special needs requires unique skills. Teachers should be able to create a structured and supportive environment that encourages participation and minimizes distractions.

# Special Education Teacher Skills (continued)

## **Collaboration:**

Special education teachers need to collaborate with other professionals, such as speech therapists, occupational therapists, and school psychologists, to provide students with the appropriate support.

## **Assistive Technology:**

Assistive technology tools can help students with special needs overcome barriers to learning. Teachers should be familiar with various assistive technology tools, such as text-to-speech software, speech recognition software, and adapted computer input devices.

## **Individualized Education Programs (IEPs):**

Special education teachers should be skilled in developing and implementing Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for students with special needs. IEPs outline the goals, accommodations, and services necessary for each student to succeed.

## **Specialized Curricula:**

Teachers should also be knowledgeable about specialized curricula and instructional strategies designed for students with special needs, such as multisensory instruction, social skills training, and positive behavior supports.

# District Support for Low Incident Disabilities

- Some students may need more specific services requiring specialized training/certification (Deaf, Blind, Autism, multiple disabilities, etc.).
- When a district does not have the ability to provide a specialized teacher for a student with a low-incident disability, a Special Education Service Agency (SESA) can assist in the development of an individualized education program for the student and provide training to the local staff to ensure student services are able to be provided in accordance with state and federal regulations.

# Contact Information

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# Stay Connected



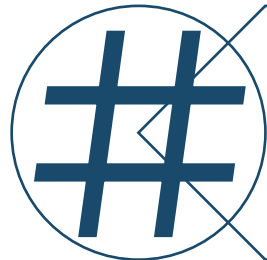
## Website

- [education.alaska.gov](http://education.alaska.gov)



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