

SPONSOR SUBSTITUTE FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 306

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVES GARA, KAWASAKI, NELSON, KERTTULA AND GRUENBERG, Salmon, Doll, Roses, Seaton, Gardner, Wilson, Fairclough

Introduced: 1/31/08

Referred: Health, Education and Social Services, Finance

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 **"An Act relating to providing a voluntary pre-elementary program within a school**
2 **district; and providing for the establishment and implementation of a statewide early**
3 **childhood education plan."**

4 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

5 *** Section 1.** AS 14.03 is amended by adding a new section to read:

6 **Sec. 14.03.065. Pre-elementary program.** (a) A pre-elementary program
7 provided by a school district must

8 (1) serve children who are three or four years of age who reside in the
9 district;

10 (2) comply with the statewide early childhood education plan adopted
11 under AS 14.07.020(a)(16); and

12 (3) to the extent appropriations are insufficient to fund all programs
13 provided by all districts that provide a pre-elementary program under this section, be
14 funded on a pro rata basis with a priority for low-income families, as defined by the

1 commissioner.

2 (b) Attendance at a pre-elementary program is optional.

3 * **Sec. 2.** AS 14.03.080 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

4 (g) A child who is three or four years of age on or before September 1
5 following the beginning of the school year and who is under school age may enter a
6 public school pre-elementary program.

7 * **Sec. 3.** AS 14.07.020(a) is amended to read:

8 (a) The department shall

9 (1) exercise general supervision over the public schools of the state
10 except the University of Alaska;

11 (2) study the conditions and needs of the public schools of the state,
12 adopt or recommend plans, administer and evaluate grants to improve school
13 performance awarded under AS 14.03.125, and adopt regulations for the improvement
14 of the public schools;

15 (3) provide advisory and consultative services to all public school
16 governing bodies and personnel;

17 (4) prescribe by regulation a minimum course of study for the public
18 schools; the regulations must provide that, if a course in American Sign Language is
19 given, the course shall be given credit as a course in a foreign language;

20 (5) establish, in coordination with the Department of Health and Social
21 Services, a program for the continuing education of children who are held in detention
22 facilities in the state during the period of detention;

23 (6) accredit those public schools that meet accreditation standards
24 prescribed by regulation by the department; these regulations shall be adopted by the
25 department and presented to the legislature during the first 10 days of any regular
26 session, and become effective 45 days after presentation or at the end of the session,
27 whichever is earlier, unless disapproved by a resolution concurred in by a majority of
28 the members of each house;

29 (7) prescribe by regulation, after consultation with the state fire
30 marshal and the state sanitarian, standards that will assure healthful and safe
31 conditions in the public and private schools of the state, including a requirement of

1 physical examinations and immunizations in pre-elementary schools; the standards for
2 private schools may not be more stringent than those for public schools;

3 (8) exercise general supervision over pre-elementary schools that
4 receive direct state or federal funding;

5 (9) exercise general supervision over elementary and secondary
6 correspondence study programs offered by municipal school districts or regional
7 educational attendance areas; the department may also offer and make available to any
8 Alaskan through a centralized office a correspondence study program;

9 (10) accredit private schools that request accreditation and that meet
10 accreditation standards prescribed by regulation by the department; nothing in this
11 paragraph authorizes the department to require religious or other private schools to be
12 licensed;

13 (11) review plans for construction of new public elementary and
14 secondary schools and for additions to and major rehabilitation of existing public
15 elementary and secondary schools and, in accordance with regulations adopted by the
16 department, determine and approve the extent of eligibility for state aid of a school
17 construction or major maintenance project; for the purposes of this paragraph, "plans"
18 include educational specifications, schematic designs, and final contract documents;

19 (12) provide educational opportunities in the areas of vocational
20 education and training, and basic education to individuals over 16 years of age who
21 are no longer attending school;

22 (13) administer the grants awarded under AS 14.11;

23 (14) establish, in coordination with the Department of Public Safety, a
24 school bus driver training course;

25 (15) require the reporting of information relating to school disciplinary
26 and safety programs under AS 14.33.120 and of incidents of disruptive or violent
27 behavior;

28 **(16) devise and implement a statewide early childhood education**
29 **plan for students three and four years of age that**

30 **(A) incorporates the early learning guidelines adopted by**
31 **the board under AS 14.07.165(6);**

1 **(B) provides for the most effective and efficient**
 2 **coordination with or expansion of pre-elementary programs operating in**
 3 **the state, including Head Start.**

4 * **Sec. 4.** AS 14.07.020(c) is amended to read:

5 (c) In this section, "pre-elementary school" means a school for children
 6 [AGES] three **or four** [THROUGH FIVE] years **of age** if the school's primary
 7 function is educational, **and a pre-elementary program that is provided by a school**
 8 **district.**

9 * **Sec. 5.** AS 14.07.165 is amended to read:

10 **Sec. 14.07.165. Duties.** The board shall adopt

11 (1) statewide goals and require each governing body to adopt written
 12 goals that are consistent with local needs;

13 (2) regulations regarding the application for and award of grants under
 14 AS 14.03.125;

15 (3) regulations implementing provisions of AS 14.11.014(b);

16 (4) regulations requiring approval by the board before a charter school,
 17 state boarding school, or a public school may provide domiciliary services;

18 (5) regulations implementing the secondary school student competency
 19 examination provisions of AS 14.03.075, including the criteria and procedure under
 20 which a governing body uses a waiver to grant a diploma to a student; criteria
 21 regarding granting a waiver must include provisions that a waiver may only be granted
 22 for students who enter the system late or have rare or unusual circumstances meriting
 23 a waiver;

24 **(6) early learning guidelines that support an effective, cost-**
 25 **efficient, and optional pre-elementary program provided under a statewide early**
 26 **childhood education plan approved by the department.**