

**HOUSE BILL NO. 59**

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA  
TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

**BY REPRESENTATIVES KAWASAKI, GARA, TUCK, AND PETERSEN**

**Introduced: 1/20/09**

**Referred: Education, Finance**

**A BILL**

**FOR AN ACT ENTITLED**

1 **"An Act providing for the establishment of a statewide early childhood education plan**  
2 **and guidelines."**

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

4 **\* Section 1.** AS 14.07.020(a) is amended to read:

5 (a) The department shall

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

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

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

14 (4) prescribe by regulation a minimum course of study for the public

1 schools; the regulations must provide that, if a course in American Sign Language is  
2 given, the course shall be given credit as a course in a foreign language;

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

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

12 (7) prescribe by regulation, after consultation with the state fire  
13 marshal and the state sanitarian, standards that will assure healthful and safe  
14 conditions in the public and private schools of the state, including a requirement of  
15 physical examinations and immunizations in pre-elementary schools; the standards for  
16 private schools may not be more stringent than those for public schools;

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

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

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

27 (11) review plans for construction of new public elementary and  
28 secondary schools and for additions to and major rehabilitation of existing public  
29 elementary and secondary schools and, in accordance with regulations adopted by the  
30 department, determine and approve the extent of eligibility for state aid of a school  
31 construction or major maintenance project; for the purposes of this paragraph, "plans"

1 include educational specifications, schematic designs, and final contract documents;

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

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

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

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

11 (16) establish by regulation criteria, based on low student performance,  
12 under which the department may intervene in a school district to improve instructional  
13 practices, as described in AS 14.07.030(14) or (15); the regulations must include

14 (A) a notice provision that alerts the district to the deficiencies  
15 and the instructional practice changes proposed by the department;

16 (B) an end date for departmental intervention, as described in  
17 AS 14.07.030(14)(A) and (B) and (15), after the district demonstrates three  
18 consecutive years of improvement consisting of not less than two percent  
19 increases in student proficiency on standards-based assessments in math,  
20 reading, and writing as provided in AS 14.03.123(f)(2)(A); and

21 (C) a process for districts to petition the department for  
22 continuing or discontinuing the department's intervention;

23 (17) notify the legislative committees having jurisdiction over  
24 education before intervening in a school district under AS 14.07.030(14) or redirecting  
25 public school funding under AS 14.07.030(15);

26 **(18) devise a statewide early childhood education plan for students**  
27 **three and four years of age that**

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

30 **(B) provides for the most effective and efficient**  
31 **coordination with or expansion of pre-elementary programs operating in**

1 **the state, including Head Start, to the extent permitted by law.**

2 \* **Sec. 2.** AS 14.07.165 is amended to read:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

20 \* **Sec. 3.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to  
21 read:

22 REPORT: EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PLAN. On or before January 15,  
23 2010, the Department of Education and Early Development shall prepare and submit a report  
24 to the legislature on the early childhood education plan devised under AS 14.07.020(a)(18),  
25 added by sec. 1 of this Act.