

**CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 69(EDC)**

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY THE HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Offered: 4/10/09

Referred: Finance

Sponsor(s): REPRESENTATIVES TUCK, PETERSEN, KAWASAKI, AND GARA, Muñoz, Edgmon,  
Thomas, Buch, Gardner

**A BILL**

**FOR AN ACT ENTITLED**

1 "An Act establishing in the Department of Education and Early Development a  
2 voluntary parent education home visiting program for pre-elementary aged children."

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

4 \* **Section 1.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section  
5 to read:

6 SHORT TITLE. This Act may be known as the Alaska Parents as Teachers Act.

7 \* **Sec. 2.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to  
8 read:

9 FINDINGS. The legislature finds that

10 (1) a parent is a child's first and most influential teacher;

11 (2) a parent's ability to enhance a child's development and ability to enter  
12 school ready to succeed can be significantly enhanced through parent education and family  
13 support that will help parents prepare their child to succeed in school;

14 (3) undiagnosed and unaddressed developmental and health problems can

1 impede overall development and school readiness and can contribute to grade retention for a  
2 child;

3 (4) early childhood home visits can lead to positive outcomes for children and  
4 families, including increased school readiness, sustained school success, improved child  
5 health and development, positive parenting practices, and reductions in child maltreatment.

6 \* **Sec. 3.** AS 14.03 is amended by adding a new section to article 1 to read:

7 **Sec. 14.03.165. Parent education home visiting program.** (a) The statewide  
8 voluntary parent education home visiting program is established in the department.  
9 The program shall be implemented through an implementation plan submitted by a  
10 local agency and approved by the department to provide home visits and resource  
11 information to participating families of a pre-elementary aged child, birth through five  
12 years of age.

13 (b) The program must include

14 (1) an opportunity for a participating family to receive home visits to a  
15 participating family's home or a mutually agreed on location by a trained parent  
16 educator employed by the department or a local agency once a month unless the  
17 trained parent educator determines that more frequent visits are required to provide  
18 identified services, in which case, the family must be afforded the opportunity to  
19 receive more frequent home visits;

20 (2) parent group meetings, arranged by the local agency, to occur not  
21 less than once a month;

22 (3) annual developmental and health screenings as recommended by  
23 the Department of Health and Social Services;

24 (4) referrals to and information on available community resources;

25 (5) research and evidence based interventions;

26 (6) program outcomes that demonstrate, five years or less after  
27 implementation of the program,

28 (A) enhanced school readiness;

29 (B) increased parent understanding of child development and  
30 developmental milestones;

31 (C) a reduction in the incidence of child abuse and neglect;

1 (D) increased identification of health problems and  
2 developmental delays through regular screenings;

3 (E) improvement of child health indicators, including  
4 immunization rates; and

5 (F) increased parental involvement.

6 (c) A local agency may apply for funding to provide services under the  
7 program by submitting an implementation plan for review and approval by the  
8 department. The implementation plan must include

9 (1) an outline of the agency's plans for delivering the services required  
10 for the program under (b) of this section;

11 (2) a description of the collaborative agreements the agency will form  
12 with community service providers to meet the needs of the families participating in the  
13 program;

14 (3) a needs assessment for the community to be served by the agency;

15 (4) an annual evaluation of and reporting on the program that includes  
16 the

17 (A) number of families and children served;

18 (B) number of aggregate visits and average number of visits  
19 conducted for each family;

20 (C) demographic information for participating families;

21 (D) number and type of health and developmental delays  
22 identified;

23 (E) number of group parent meetings held;

24 (F) average cost for each family served;

25 (G) number of children screened and receiving referrals for  
26 further evaluation; and

27 (H) the number of referrals to other community organizations  
28 and resources.

29 (d) The department shall

30 (1) apply for and maximize federal and private funding sources to  
31 support the program established under this section;

- 1 (2) identify and engage private partners to support the program;
- 2 (3) limit the number of participating families to 650 for the first two
- 3 years of program implementation and thereafter increase the number of participating
- 4 families based on demand; and
- 5 (4) adopt regulations to implement this program, including standards
- 6 for the qualification and approval of trained parent educators that require
- 7 fingerprinting and criminal justice history screening of applicants.

8 (e) In this section,

9 (1) "developmental and health screening" means the process of

10 measuring the progress of a child to determine whether the child suffers a delay or

11 potential delay in normal development or is advanced in one or more areas of

12 development including understanding and use of language, perception through sight or

13 hearing, motor development and hand-eye coordination, health, and physical

14 development;

15 (2) "family" means one or more biological or adoptive parent and one

16 or more of the parent's pre-elementary aged children;

17 (3) "local agency" means a school district, regional educational

18 attendance area, or a not for profit organization that provides community services;

19 (4) "trained parent educator" means a person employed by the

20 department or a local agency who has been trained and approved to provide parent

21 education under the program.

22 \* **Sec. 4.** AS 14.07.020(a) is amended to read:

23 (a) The department shall

24 (1) exercise general supervision over the public schools of the state

25 except the University of Alaska;

26 (2) study the conditions and needs of the public schools of the state,

27 adopt or recommend plans, administer and evaluate grants to improve school

28 performance awarded under AS 14.03.125, and adopt regulations for the improvement

29 of the public schools;

30 (3) provide advisory and consultative services to all public school

31 governing bodies and personnel;

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1 construction or major maintenance project; for the purposes of this paragraph, "plans"  
2 include educational specifications, schematic designs, and final contract documents;

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

27 **(18) establish standards and provide technical assistance and**  
28 **oversight for the statewide parent education home visiting program under**  
29 **AS 14.03.165.**